

JOHN WESLEY'S ORDER OF SALVATION AS AN ONTOLOGICAL BASIS
FOR UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

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ABSTRACT

John Wesley's Order of Salvation as an Ontological Basis for Understanding the Process of Psychotherapy

by

Roy Allan Carter

The problem addressed in this dissertation is to discover how theology can inform the process of psychotherapy. In order to address this problem John Wesley's order of salvation is used as a basis for studying the interrelationships between theology and psychotherapy.

The thesis of this work is that there are implicit theological assumptions hidden in the process of psychotherapy which can be explicated by using John Wesley's order of salvation. The process of psychotherapy used in this study is the process developed by Lewis R. Wolberg in his work, The Technique of Psychotherapy. This process implicitly assumes that there are necessary steps to be taken in order to achieve harmony with the self and with others. These steps are explicated by using Wesley's order of salvation, which serves as a norm for understanding and describing the steps taken in the process of psychotherapy. By using Wesley's doctrines of original sin, atonement, repentance, justification, new birth, repentance in believers, and Christian perfection, the rudiments of an order of salvation are shown to be present in the process of psychotherapy.

The methodology used to accomplish the above task is a revision of Thomas C. Oden's methodology used in his book, Kerygma and Counseling. Oden's methodology examines what theology assumes about the nature of the psychotherapeutic task and the nature of our humanness and makes the theological assumptions normative for his study.

A conclusion drawn from this study is that when the process of psychotherapy is evaluated and critiqued from the standpoint of Wesley's soteriology, the process of psychotherapy can be seen as a theological process. Another conclusion is that Wesley's theological understandings help broaden and deepen our understandings of the process of psychotherapy.

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Introduction

Problem and Thesis

The problem being confronted in this dissertation is discovering how theology can inform the process of psychotherapy. Part of this problem includes the convergences and divergences between the two disciplines. In order to pursue this problem John Wesley's order of salvation is used as a basis for studying and critiquing the interrelationships between theology and psychotherapy.

The thesis of this work is that there are implicit theological assumptions hidden in Lewis R. Wolberg's process of psychotherapy which can be explicated and critiqued in light of Wesley's order of salvation. The process of psychotherapy implicitly assumes that there are necessary steps to be taken in order to achieve harmony with the self and with others. These steps can be explicated by using John Wesley's order of salvation. The work of this dissertation is to succinctly define how Wesley's order of salvation can serve as a norm for understanding and describing the steps taken in the process of psychotherapy and how it can serve as a basis for critiquing the process of psychotherapy. Wesley's order of salvation is compared to Lewis R. Wolberg's work on the process of psychotherapy with the goal of identifying theological resources for use by pastoral psychotherapists.

Methodology

The methodology used to accomplish the above task is a revision of Thomas C. Oden's methodology used most explicitly in his book, Kerygma and Counseling.¹ In this book Oden has argued that the psychotherapy of Carl Rogers has an implicit demythologized theology.² Oden delineates Roger's psychotherapeutic principles and demonstrates how they embody implicit theological tenets by using Karl Barth's analogia fidei. Oden is trying to show, as have Don Browning and David Tracy, that at the outer limits of a scientist's enterprise, there exist certain assumptions about the world that are basically theological.³

Oden's methodology examines what theology assumes about the nature of the psychotherapeutic task and the nature of our humanness and makes the theological assumptions normative for his study. In order to accomplish this Oden uses an "analogy of faith."⁴

He uses this analogy because it begins with the divine word or activity as it is received and understood in faith and perceives the natural entity or relationship from the vantage point of the divine activity (e.g. first we come to know of the healing action of God in the Christ event; then having learned the character of authentic

¹Thomas C. Oden, Kerygma and Counseling (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966). Used by permission.

²Ibid., 83-103.

³Don Browning, ed., Practical Theology (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), 187-202.

⁴Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 16.

healing, we may perceive psychotherapeutic healing as analogous to the healing activity of God).⁵

In other words, Oden uses theology as his norm. By using Barth's analogia fidei Oden has clearly chosen "to read the analogy only in the manward direction, exclusively from the self-disclosure of God to the intrapersonal and interpersonal processes."⁶

The methodology is to evaluate the implicit and demythologized theology in the process of psychotherapy by focusing on the order of salvation developed by John Wesley. The rudiments of an order of salvation are already present in the process of psychotherapy and Wesley's order of salvation is used to explicate these rudiments and to critically interact with them. This is done by applying the analogical process that Oden employs. The strength of this methodology is that it is a clear, consistent theological method grounded in a solid, traditional theology of salvation as developed by Wesley.

Don Browning explains this method in Atonement and Psychotherapy when he states,

this method means that the pastor brings theological questions to bear on the study of concrete, empirically observable pastoral practices and draws theological answers from his reflection on those processes. With regard to the dialogue between theology and psychotherapy, it means that theology would bring theological questions to the study of the psychological material and then draw

⁵Ibid., 16.

⁶Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 139.

theological conclusions.⁷

Browning goes on to say that a study of the process of psychotherapy "can reveal positive theological truth because finally all of reality is undergirded by God's relationship."⁸ If theological questions are asked by the pastor then God can be seen to operate in and through the process of psychotherapy.

Browning agrees with Oden that analogies between psychotherapy should start with God and move in the humanward direction. He is in disagreement with Oden in that he believes the analogical process should work both from God to humans, and, from humans to God.

In reviewing other authors who have developed a methodology to describe the interface between theology and psychotherapy, Browning's critique of reading the analogy only from God to humans is the basic criticism of Oden's methodology.

Other authors with similar methodologies of understanding the relationship between theology and psychotherapy are Paul Tillich, David Tracy, and Seward Hiltner. Paul Tillich compares existentialism,

⁷Don Browning, Atonement and Psychotherapy (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), 160.

⁸Ibid., 160.

psychoanalysis, and theology in his work, Theology of Culture.⁹ Tillich claims that both theology and Freudian psychoanalysis describe our existential predicament of estrangement and the possibility of being healed. Tillich contends that psychoanalysis, although it may heal specific illnesses, cannot heal our existential estrangement from God. This type of healing is the work and object of salvation.

The essential difference between them is that Tillich focuses more on letting psychoanalysis inform theology than Oden would. Oden would argue that Tillich has resigned himself to accepting a discussion in which psychology frames the questions for theology. Oden would argue that a theological method should start with questions that are theological in nature, not psychological.

Seward Hiltner's work with theology and psychology is a pragmatic method of using the insights of modern psychology to inform the methods of pastoral care and counseling. He starts with the concrete processes of pastoral care and derives theological truths. The strength of Hiltner's methodology, as seen in his use of field theory, is its openness for dialogue between the disciplines of theology and

⁹Paul Tillich, "The Theological Significance of Existentialism and Psychoanalysis," chapter 8 in Theology of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 112-26.

psychology.¹⁰ Oden would criticize Hiltner's pragmatism as being too willing to borrow from the psychological sciences and not willing to deal with the depths of theological assumptions about psychotherapy.

Oden's methodology is also similar to David Tracy's ideas about analogical thinking.¹¹ Both Tracy and Oden recognize that in using an analogy there are differences even in the similarities. Tracy emphasizes a need for keeping a tension between the subjects being compared by their being mutually critical of each other. These critical correlations are to be held in tension with real affirmations. In this sense, Tracy's analogical method is at once both dialectical and analogical. Tracy's method would critique Oden by saying more critical interaction is needed between theology and psychology.

This lack of critical interaction between theology and psychotherapy is the chief weakness of Oden's methodology. This one-way reading of the analogical process does not allow for a creative dialogue and for criticisms of theology from psychotherapy.

Another danger of Oden's methodology is that it can slip over into treating psychotherapy and theology as two

¹⁰Seward Hiltner, Preface to Pastoral Theology (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958).

¹¹David Tracy, "A Christian Systematic Analogical Imagination," chapter 10 in The Analogical Imagination (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981), 405-26.

separate and distinct spheres. This way of viewing life has led some theologians to a duality between secular and sacred that is not only not helpful, but is theologically inaccurate. This study does not encourage this dualistic thinking. This study sees the reality of God as part of the secular world and the secular world as part of the reality of God, thus negating any dualism.

Because of these criticisms about Oden's methodology, this method has been revised in order for this discussion to be more dialogical and critical. Instead of allowing the analogy to read only in the humanward direction, I would propose an analogical process that works in both humanward and Godward directions. This revision of Oden's methodology would be more in agreement with the method Don Browning proposes in his chapter, "Some Methodological Considerations," in Atonement and Psychotherapy.¹²

However, the use of reading the analogy Godward (from humans to God) will be limited for two reasons. First, given the already large scope of this dissertation, to try to read the analogy both ways is too unwieldy. Secondly, the central focus of this dissertation is to reclaim a theological heritage for pastoral counseling and psychotherapy.¹³ Reading the analogy Godward has been one of the pastoral

¹²Browning, Atonement and Psychotherapy, 149-73.

¹³The words pastoral counseling and pastoral psychotherapy will be used interchangeably.

psychotherapists' chief stumbling blocks in understanding and claiming their theological roots. By using Godward analogies somewhat uncritically, there has been no firm basis for a consistent doctrine of analogy.¹⁴ Instead of trying to discover what God reveals to persons about their condition, the pastoral psychotherapist has been an expert at discovering what persons reveal about themselves and then reading this as an analogy of what God has said about persons. To use persons' self-revelations as a clarifying analogy in order to sharpen our understanding of God's standards is legitimate. It is not legitimate to assume a human's understanding is synonymous with God's understanding. In this study the primary focus of the analogical process will be in the humanward direction.

Another crucial issue in using this type of methodology is the delicate balance between theology as a resource in understanding psychotherapy and theology as the discipline with the answers for psychotherapy. Psychotherapy and theology are viewed as independent disciplines. Neither discipline can have the answers for the other in any authoritative way, yet both have important data and view points for the other. The more dialogical approach to the analogical process should hold these two disciplines in proper tension.

¹⁴Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 123-30.

Another critical issue concerning the use of this method is one of language. Which language should be used -- theological or psychological? The focus of this dissertation being theological in nature would presuppose a theological vocabulary. Theological language is being used. However, this is made more difficult because the comparisons involve two different disciplines, each with its own vocabulary, and two hundred years apart in time. It is tempting to use psychological language in order to give a more current form to this study, bridging some of the aforementioned gap. This would almost be necessary if this work were being addressed to the general public. However, my assumption is that this monograph is addressed to a particular group of persons -- pastoral psychotherapists. My understanding of pastoral psychotherapists is that they have theological training and are able to understand theological language. Because this work is aimed at such a group of specialists, and not to the general public, no basic redefining of terms will be attempted.

Finally, the particular strengths of using Oden's methodology for this particular study need to be noted. First, this analogical process can be seen as a corrective to seeing psychotherapy and theology as two totally distinct spheres. This is accomplished by taking the implicit assumptions of psychotherapy and comparing them to implicitly theological assumptions.

These assumptions in Wolberg are explicated by evaluating and critiquing him in light of Wesley.¹⁵ In other words, when Wolberg discusses the psychotherapeutic objective of establishing a warm, working relationship in the initial phase of psychotherapy, this is critiqued in light of Wesley's understanding of persons' relationships to God. The concepts of original sin, prevenient grace, and atonement all inform the process of establishing relationships. The central assumption of this technique is that behind psychotherapeutic assumptions lie theological assumptions. The first step in explicating these implicit theological assumptions is to outline the psychotherapeutic assumptions. Then, these assumptions are compared to, and critiqued by, Wesley's theological beliefs in his order of salvation. Wesley's theology informs and expands Wolberg's psychotherapeutic model. The critical interaction between Wolberg and Wesley yields a theologically and psychologically integrated model for understanding the process of psychotherapy.

The main reason for attempting this integration is to help pastoral counselors to re-claim theological and religious resources in understanding psychotherapy.

Oden's methodology has a second strength in this attempt because it serves as a corrective to what some have seen as pastoral psychotherapists either selling out to modern

¹⁵Lewis R. Wolberg, The Technique of Psychotherapy, 2 vols., 3d ed. (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1977). Used by permission.

psychology, or the refusal of pastoral psychotherapists to take theology seriously.

A final strength of Oden's methodology for this study is that his viewpoint for understanding relationships is one of affirming persons' relationships with God as being of primary importance. This is also the way John Wesley would have approached the problems he addressed.

In order for the analogical process to be effective in this study, three requirements need to be met. First, Wesley's theological positions, as they evolve in the order of salvation, need to be explained in detail. Primary sources are used to document this process. The particular order of salvation developed in this work is John Wesley's own order.

Secondly, Wesley's theology is reinterpreted in order for it to be more applicable to the process of psychotherapy and the twentieth century. Help for this task comes from those who have already made such attempts. Some of these authors include Albert C. Outler, Harald Lindstrom, Martin Schmidt, W.R. Cannon, and others found in the bibliography of this dissertation.

Thirdly, a discussion of how Wesley can inform and interact with the process of psychotherapy is included. This is the creative work of this project and the specific point at which my revision of Oden's methodology is applied.

Lewis R. Wolberg's two-volume work, The Technique of Psychotherapy, is used in this dissertation for two reasons.

First, Wolberg is not only attentive to the practical and technical side of psychotherapy, but is also careful in his outline of the over-all process of psychotherapy. Because of this attention to process he is particularly valuable in a study where two processes are being compared. Secondly, he represents a psychotherapeutic orientation that is compatible with Wesley. Oden illustrates how his method might work with psychoanalytic therapy in his book, Kerygma and Counseling. Others, such as Albert Outler, David Roberts, and Carroll Wise have also shown how psychoanalytic thought and work deals with traditional theological concerns. Wolberg's The Technique of Psychotherapy is highly valued by, and regularly used, by counseling and training centers because of his in-depth treatment of various issues related to the psychotherapeutic process as well as to the more practical concerns of psychotherapy.

Because this book was first published in 1954, it has been difficult to find reviews of this work in the literature. The two or three reviews found all agreed that Wolberg was a pioneer in the field of writing about the technique of psychotherapy. That this work of Wolberg "has retained a special place"¹⁶ in the literature of psychotherapy is evident. Its value could be argued on the fact that it has gone through three editions and two reprints of the second

¹⁶Hans H. Strupp, "A Guide to the Impossible Profession," Contemporary Psychology 23 (October 1978): 710-11.

edition.

It is not being proposed that Wolberg's understandings are, or should be, normative. He does represent one particular type of psychotherapy -- psychoanalytic psychotherapy. This particular type of psychotherapy still has much to offer in terms of its understandings of the human predicament and its understanding of the process of psychotherapy.

Wesley's order of salvation could be used to critique the process of psychotherapy in other schools, or modes, of therapy. Because of the depth and breadth of material offered by Wolberg, he offers the most fruitful material for dialogue with Wesley.

Significance of This Study

This study is not meant to be practical in the sense of adding new techniques to the field of psychotherapy. Its importance lies in the development of an alternative way of perceiving the process of psychotherapy. The work of this dissertation is to use Wesley's order of salvation as a theoretical and philosophical framework from which to view, and critique, the process of psychotherapy. This alternative view can hopefully expand the scope and perception of the religious and theological nature of the work of the pastoral psychotherapist. This, in turn, hopefully keeps theological and religious issues in the forefront of psychotherapeutic work, as opposed to being relegated to post-therapeutic hour

reflection.

Though practical outcomes are hoped for, they are clearly not the central focus of this paper. The focus is solely on how Wesley's order of salvation can expand and enrich our understanding of the psychotherapeutic process as a religious and theological journey.

This study emphasizes the need for a unifying theological framework for psychotherapy that is understandable and helpful for pastoral psychotherapists. This emphasis builds upon the recognition by many psychotherapists that numerous personal issues faced in psychotherapy have at their roots theological issues. Also, from the discipline of psychology we see a need expressed for the input of theology. In some cases psychotherapists have tried to develop a theology with psychological tools in order to address issues where theologians apparently do not speak or are not being heard. This study therefore, addresses the need for a word from theology to psychotherapy using theological constructs that relate to issues faced by psychotherapists.

This theoretical approach demands that pastoral counseling take seriously the ultimate nature of questions with which people may be troubled. These deep and difficult questions require the full depth of religious and theological thought. These questions need to be addressed in a theoretical way. This is true because without such a theoretical foundation we find our counseling based on values

and procedures that do not always coincide with both our heritage and what our belief systems have shown to be salugenic.

This study's purpose is to provide a theoretical framework from which ultimate questions can be used to inform the process of psychotherapy. This theoretical framework in turn provides a basis from which to delineate and critique the presuppositions of Lewis R. Wolberg. It also provides a structure into which Wolberg's contributions may be organized. This recognizes that Wolberg's process of psychotherapy has an implicit theological base from which it is developed and can be interpreted. In this study, these theological bases are the theological assumptions of John Wesley.

Finally, such a theoretical study can provide a unifying center from which psychotherapy can operate. This is precisely where theology becomes so valuable. Because of its vast tradition and history, the resources of theology can provide a framework on which the discoveries of psychology can be analyzed, proven, and made more valuable than uninterpreted fact. In the same manner this theoretical framework can be improved by the contributions from the process of psychotherapy.

Another way in which this study can make a contribution is in the increased recognition of pastoral psychotherapists to establish their own unique theological frame of reference and their own unique identity. Pastoral psychotherapists have

too often relied on psychology to inform them. In many ways we have sold our birthright to psychology. This has been discussed by many of those involved in the dialogue between theology and psychology and is Oden's chief defense of his methodology. William E. Hulme has accurately described the problem in Pastoral Care and Counseling. He states,

Now that pastoral counseling has 'come of age,' however, some have accused it of departing from its ministerial roots. Not only has pastoral counseling incorporated much from psychological disciplines, it has according to this criticism, become a psychological discipline. The theology that may be obvious in worship seems absent in pastoral counseling. Rather than integrating psychological insights into the ministry of counseling, say these critics, pastoral counseling has divorced itself from its traditional religious base. If pastoral counselors have become more psychologists or psychotherapists than pastors, then pastoral counseling has lost its uniqueness or even distinctiveness.¹⁷

This study is part of the movement to reclaim the unique and distinct identity of pastoral counseling by reclaiming its critical theological perspective on psychology. Its focus will be to provide a theological undergirding for the practicing pastoral psychotherapist. This paper develops a theological framework based on John Wesley's order of salvation. Wesley can speak clearly and meaningfully of God's action in the midst of the pastoral psychotherapist's human action. Wesley is used to integrate theological and religious understandings with psychotherapeutic practice. This integration is done in an academic and theoretical way in this

¹⁷William E. Hulme, Pastoral Care and Counseling (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1981), 8.

paper. However, it is my hope and my belief that, I will be able to personally integrate Wesley's work and understanding into my daily work as a pastoral psychotherapist. This type of integration is important if our work is to be truly theologically integrative. This is the type of integration Hulme speaks of in Pastoral Care and Counseling when he says:

Such integration takes place initially within the person of the counselors, which in turn leads counselors to express this integration in their counseling. On the other hand, as counselors follow a structure which manifests this integration, they are reenforcing their own internal integration.¹⁸

This type of study can produce an integrated structure. However, this study has value primarily on a theoretical level. The personal integration that Hulme speaks of will hopefully be a by-product of this work.

This discussion between theology and psychotherapy is using a more classical theological outlook by using Wesley. This type of endeavor has not been attempted with much regularity since the mid and late 1950s, but according to theologians such as Oden and Browning is greatly needed. Attention has been turned to more modern theological formulations. There have been few significant formulations of classical theology as it informs psychotherapy. Oden sees the importance and need for a return to more classical theological understandings because they offer a firmer basis for viewing our human predicament. In Agenda for Theology

¹⁸Ibid., 9.

Oden argues for a return to classical theological formulations from more modern interpretations. In that book he states:

The postmodern person is looking for something beyond modernity, some source of meaning and value that transcends the assumptions of modernity, the postmodern mind is now struggling to set itself free. Some of these postmoderns have happened on classical Christianity and experienced themselves as having been suddenly lifted out of the quicksands onto firmer ground. They have sought to understand the incredible energy and delivering power of Christianity, and, in the process of returning to the classical texts of ancient Christian tradition and scripture, they have begun to discover that the orthodox core of classical Christianity constitutes a powerful, wide-ranging, viable critique of modern consciousness.¹⁹

This type of study should help pastoral psychotherapists to reclaim a solid, traditional theological dimension of their work and identity. The pastoral psychotherapist's identity has been compromised because of this accommodation to modernity. This accommodation has left us with little sense of history or heritage and has thrown pastoral counseling into an identity crisis. Just as adolescents attempt to form their own identity by trying new values, behaviors, and ideological perspectives, so has pastoral counseling tried modern theological methods and interpretations. Old, traditional, parental values have been repudiated and the modern values have been adopted. However, the modern values have left something to be desired. As the pastoral counseling movement has matured it has begun to see the wisdom of the classical fathers. We are beginning to

¹⁹Thomas C. Oden, Agenda for Theology (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 49.

understand that we cannot fully develop our identity until our unique and inherent ideological perspective is reclaimed. Once this is reclaimed further maturation will be possible.

Another argument for the significance of this study is the growing emphasis of claiming the unique strengths of denominational heritage. In the United Methodist circles this movement has been fueled by the bicentennial of the founding of the Methodist church. This particular study has significance to the United Methodists and other denominations who have based their doctrine on Wesley or have been influenced by his life and thought. Because of Wesley's unique soteriology, the theological interpretations and conclusions are particularly Wesleyan in perspective. This should yield a peculiarly Methodist base for pastoral counseling and should, therefore, further enrich the Methodist churches and the ecumenical church and expand the identity base for the pastoral counseling movement.

Finally, the value of this study is based on the unique resources of John Wesley to address the problems that have been outlined above. Although technically Wesley was not a theologian who approached theology in a systematic way, "his thought was consciously organized around a stable core of basic coordinated motifs."²⁰

Outler sketches Wesley

²⁰Albert C. Outler, ed., John Wesley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 27.

as a significant theologian whose importance as theologian - then and now - has been sadly underestimated by both devotees and critics. He was, I have come to believe, the most important Anglican theologian in his century. He is, I also believe, a very considerable resource in our own time for our theological reflections."²¹

Wesley does meet the criteria of being a traditional, classically-oriented theologian. Thus, Wesley's theological formulations should help us as pastoral psychotherapists to re-claim our theological heritage.

Two remaining questions need to be addressed concerning the use of Wesley's ordo salutis for this study. First, how did Wesley address the need for pastoral counseling in his historical perspective? Secondly, how did he address this need theologically?

The first question has been addressed in Martin Schmidt's work, John Wesley: A Theological Biography. In his chapter on "John Wesley as Pastor," Schmidt claims, "concern for souls has been the *raison d'etre*, the sphere of activity and the rule of life of the student circle at Oxford."²² This concern for souls showed itself in the organization of the societies which were begun for the purposes of pastoral care. Pastoral care was a key factor in the Wesleyan movement.²³ Part of this pastoral care was the requirement that

²¹Albert C. Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit (Nashville: Tidings Press, 1971), 1. Used by permission.

²²Martin Schmidt, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, vol. 2 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), 118.

²³*Ibid.*, 118.

individuals lay bare the state of their own souls to others. this examination of the soul is allied by nature to modern day counseling and therapy. Oden²⁴ has shown the direct similarities of this approach to psychotherapy done in small groups. Oden's thesis is that the whole encounter culture is based on seventeenth and eighteenth century pietism. He quotes Wesley at great length when comparing pietism to today's group experiences. It seems reasonable, based on this information, to argue that Wesley had a concern for, and involvement in, a pastoral care movement in the eighteenth century that has some common features to the present day counseling movement.

Theologically, Wesley saw an order to Christian experience. He understood that there is a growth and progression in Christian religious experience.²⁵ This progression can be seen in his order of salvation. This progression of events is a unique offering of Wesley for helping pastoral counseling understand the process of psychotherapy as a theological process. Wesley's order of salvation can be shown to embody the process of psychotherapy. Or, to state this in Oden's style, the process of psychotherapy is a demythologized form of interpersonal

²⁴Thomas C. Oden, The Intensive Group Experience (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972)

²⁵Jack Verheyden, class notes from "The Life and Thought of John Wesley," School of Theology at Claremont, 29 June 1982.

encounter found in Wesley's order of salvation. The whole ordo salutis of classical Christian theology, and Wesleyan theology, is recapitulated in the language of the process of psychotherapy.²⁶

Finally, I believe Wesley has much more to offer present day pastoral psychotherapy than just his theological beliefs centering around his order of salvation. However, most of these are only tangentially related to this present study. Some of these areas would include Wesley's work with groups, his understanding of the importance of experience as a source of authority, and his concern around the relationships between mental health and physical health. As I work through Wesley's beliefs I will point out some of these areas for further study.

Definitions

The definitions of the doctrines in the order of salvation will ultimately be John Wesley's own definitions. These are interpreted and expanded by authors listed in the bibliography.

The terms pastoral counseling and pastoral psychotherapy refer to a process in which a pastoral psychotherapist uses the insights and principles derived from the disciplines of theology and psychology in working with individuals, couples, groups or families. The purpose of

²⁶Oden, The Intensive Group Experience, 12; and Kerygma and Counseling, 102.

pastoral psychotherapy is the achievement of wholeness and health. Religious resources are used by the pastoral psychotherapist and are integrated with insights from the behavioral sciences.

A pastoral psychotherapist is a person who provides psychotherapy and understands the psychotherapeutic process in its theological dimensions as well as its psychological meanings.²⁷

The definition of ontological is technically that which pertains to the nature of being itself. In this study, ontological is used to mean a presupposition about the relationship between psychotherapy and Wesley's order of salvation that all things, including psychotherapy have as their nature of being a relationship to, and dependence on, God as a source of understanding them. John Wesley's order of salvation is being used as an ontological basis for understanding psychotherapy because it is the norm from which psychotherapy is being understood.

The definitions of the process of psychotherapy are centered around psychoanalytic understandings. In particular, Lewis R. Wolberg's two volumes on The Technique of Psychotherapy is used as a primary reference. The psychotherapeutic process is understood as entailing three

²⁷This definition of pastoral psychotherapist and counselor is based on the definition in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors Directory (Fairfax, Va.: AAPC, 1989), iv.

separate phases -- the initial phase, the middle phase, and the termination phase.

The initial phase involves the establishment of a working relationship with the client. This therapeutic relationship is seen as the vehicle for change in the client. During each of the three phases there are three main issues that will be dealt with: (1) the therapeutic tasks required of the psychotherapist and patient; (2) resistances from the client to treatment; and (3) countertransference issues. There are numerous sub-issues under each of these three main issues. However, to outline them here would be too burdensome.

The middle phase includes the evaluation of the causes and dynamics of the client's problems, and helping the client translate his understandings into appropriate behaviors and actions. Resistances to changes in the client's life and the dynamics of how a person can change are issues dealt with in the middle phase.

The termination phase involves the ending of therapy through the evaluation of the progress of therapy. This phase is completed when the client and the therapist no longer feel that it is necessary to have formal meetings in order for the psychotherapy process to go on in continuous fashion.

Problems Faced in This Study

The central problem outside the dialogue between Wesley and the process of psychotherapy is the use of eighteenth

century theologian in dealing with twentieth century psychotherapy. The world-view of the eighteenth century is reinterpreted in order to be relevant for pastoral counseling today.

This is one of the issues that Outler addresses in "A New Future for Wesley Studies: An Agenda for 'Phase III.'"²⁸ In this chapter Outler discusses three major areas of concern in understanding and interpreting Wesley's works. First, he emphasizes that any work on Wesley take into account Wesley's own intentions. This would include the need for accurate interpretations and representations. In order to meet this first criterion, Outler outlines a second guideline for Wesley studies. This is that Wesley be interpreted in light of the sources upon which he based his work. This is a call to understand, and take account of, Wesley's historical context. Finally, any study of Wesley should be relevant for today's theological issues. The most difficult of these three criteria to meet is the second -- an accurate understanding of Wesley's historical context.

A second major problem faced in this study is one of beginnings and endings. Wesley begins and ends his order of salvation at different levels than Wolberg begins and ends the process of psychotherapy. Wolberg begins his process of

²⁸Albert C. Outler, "A New Future for Wesley Studies: 'Phase III,'" in The Future of Methodist Theological Traditions, ed. M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 34-52.

bring with them. Wesley's order of salvation sees this process as always beginning with original sin. Though there are similarities between clients' presenting problems and the condition of original sin, there are differences in breadth and depth of understanding. Wolberg sees individuals' problems as being psychological in nature, whereas Wesley sees these problems as being essentially religious and spiritual issues.

Wesley describes the culmination of the process of salvation as Christian perfection. Though again there are similarities in outcome between a client successfully completing psychotherapy and Christian perfection and final salvation, there are basic differences. Christian perfection indicates a type of relationship with God and Christ as well as with self and others. Termination from psychotherapy may possibly indicate significant personality change, but has no implications concerning a person's spiritual condition. These basic differences, as well as similarities, will be noted and discussed throughout this study.

Limits of This Study

This study is different from other studies on Wesley and salvation such as those of Donald Joy and James Fowler. Donald Joy's work, "Human Development and Christian Holiness," is a study of moral development and Wesley's order of

salvation.²⁹ Joy does not use Wesley's complete order of salvation, but instead uses three "states" described in the sermon, "On the Spirit of Bondage and Adoption." Though these three "states" are similar to the stages of original sin, justification, and sanctification, they do not have the depth of material found in Wesley's other works.

A second drawback in Joy's study is that it is based on the moral development scheme of Jean Piaget. Psychological categories of human development are not alluded to, only moral and intellectual development. Because of Joy's use of these categories his study is of limited use with this work.

Another prominent work on Wesley is James Fowler's work on Wesley's own spiritual pilgrimage.³⁰ In this paper he traces Wesley's religious development using the stages of faith that he has developed. Fowler's work has the same basic limitations as Joy's in relationship to this paper. The stages Fowler develops are stages of faith and are not directly human developmental stages in the psychological sense.

Included in this type of study would also be Robert Moore's excellent study of Wesley's psychological and theological development as developed by using the methodology of Erik Erikson. In his study, John Wesley and Authority: A

²⁹Donald M. Joy, "Human Development and Christian Holiness." Asbury Seminarian 31 (April 1976): 5-27.

³⁰James Fowler, Stages of Faith (New York: Harper and Row, 1981).

Psychological Perspective, Moore shows how Wesley creatively and successfully used what he learned as a child to be successful in his endeavors as an adult.³¹ The author shows how Wesley's theology directly evolved from his own developmental struggles. Although there are some parallels between this type of developmental theory and psychotherapeutic theory, this particular work is not directly applicable to the study of Wesley's theology as it is developed in his order of salvation.

Chapter Summary

The unique contribution of this study will be to demonstrate how Wesley's theology as developed in his order of salvation can be used as a norm for understanding the process of psychotherapy. This study will yield a uniquely Wesleyan theological perspective and uniquely Wesleyan theological understanding of the process of psychotherapy. The intention of this paper is to re-claim the theological process, as well as specific theological tenets, that are implicit and sometimes hidden in the process of psychotherapy. Thomas Oden's methodology helps to demonstrate that the process of psychotherapy recapitulates the order of salvation as developed by John Wesley.

This study is unique because it is using Wesley's theology as the basis for the study of the process of

³¹Robert L. Moore, John Wesley and Authority: A Psychological Perspective (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979).

psychotherapy. A strength of this study is that by using a single theologian a more unified base is offered from which to compare the process of psychotherapy.

Other studies have compared salvation to healing or have dealt with singular theological issues such as guilt or conversion. This study is unique in outlining how the entire process of salvation, in a step-by-step study, can be used to explicate theological issues from the process of psychotherapy and how these theological assumptions can be used as a norm for understanding psychotherapy.

The contribution of this work to Wesley studies is that this particular study faithfully uses Wesley's own ideas and concepts to critique the twentieth-century process of psychotherapy. No significant revision of Wesley's theology is attempted. It is assumed his work and thought can stand on their own in offering a resource by which to understand and extricate the theological assumptions that are implicit throughout the process of psychotherapy.

This dissertation concludes that Wesley's theology is just as relevant and just as applicable to life processes today as it was two centuries ago. This study affirms the depth and breadth of Wesley's theology as being a viable resource for understanding the process of psychotherapy. In more general terms, Wesley's theology accurately describes the twentieth century as well as the eighteenth century.

The uniqueness of this study is that Wesley speaks for

himself. This, in turn, protects Wesley from being misinterpreted by trying to make him be, or say, something that is not compatible with his own thought.

The work of this paper in the following chapters follows the general outline of describing each step of Wesley's order of salvation and using Wesley's understandings as a way to explicate the theological issues in Wolberg's phases of psychotherapy. In the first chapter, the steps of original sin, atonement, and prevenient grace as used a theological basis for understanding the basic issues in the initial phase of psychotherapy as outline by Wolberg. In the second chapter, repentance, justification, new birth and assurance are used to explicate the theological assumptions in the middle phase of treatment. The third chapter compares repentance in believers and Christian perfection to the issues raised in the termination phase of treatment. A final chapter develops the conclusions derived from this study.

CHAPTER 1

The Initial Phase of Psychotherapy

The objective of the first chapter of this dissertation is to use John Wesley's understanding of original sin, atonement, and prevenient grace as a norm for explicating the hidden theological assumptions in Lewis R. Wolberg's initial phase of psychotherapy.

First, I will outline the initial phase of psychotherapy as described by Wolberg. Then John Wesley's theological views will be used as a theological base for understanding the initial phase of psychotherapy. Methodologically, Wesley's order of salvation will be used to help ask theological questions of psychotherapeutic issues and then theological understandings will be derived from these questions.

Wolberg's Initial Phase of Psychotherapy

The principal objective of the initial phase of psychotherapy is establishing a working relationship with the patient.¹ Wolberg develops this thought by saying the relationship

is the crucible in which personality change is forged. Without such mutuality maximum therapeutic progress will not be scored. Because the working relationship is so vital to success in therapy, all tasks must be

¹Wolberg, 1:391. See chapter 34 for a more in-depth discussion of this issue.

subordinated to the objective of its achievement.²

In order to make sure this relationship is accomplished Wolberg says four therapeutic tasks must be resolved.³

The first task to be accomplished is the motivation of the patient if they do not already possess such motivation. Wolberg states, "The therapist here will have to concentrate efforts on creating in the patient proper incentives for the acceptance of help."⁴

A second therapeutic task is removing or clarifying any misconceptions the patient may have about psychotherapy and the way it works.⁵

"The third therapeutic task of the first treatment phase is to convince the patient that the therapist understands his suffering and is capable of helping him."⁶ The purpose of this task is to let the patient experience the therapeutic relationship as different from other relationships with authority.

A final therapeutic task "is the tentative defining with the patient the objectives in therapy."⁷ Wolberg

²Ibid., 1:391.

³Ibid., 1:387-88. Wolberg gives "A Practical Outline for Psychotherapy" on these pages.

⁴Ibid., 1:391.

⁵Ibid., 1:391-392.

⁶Ibid., 1:392.

⁷Ibid., 1:392.

explains this process by elucidating the importance of the therapist's outlining possibilities in therapy. He states,

An explanation that a complete rehabilitation of the personality is the most desirable goal (that is indicated in some instances but not necessary in others) and that it will require a greater period than less ambitious goals that may bring the patient to a reasonable equilibrium, (although he may continue to be handicapped by some problems) may be in order.⁸

Wolberg illustrates the importance of teaching patients about the process of change and psychotherapy in order that the patient can be prepared to participate in such a process.

In the initial phase Wolberg also outlines three major types of resistance to therapy.⁹ They are: (1) lack of motivation or unacceptance of the fact that being helped is possible; (2) refusal to accept the therapist's definition of the treatment situation; and (3) numerous emotional reactions that are resistances to a warm working relationship, such as dependency, aggression, or detachment. Wolberg believes that these characterological resistances are the greatest interference in the development of a working relationship.¹⁰

According to Wolberg therapy cannot begin until these resistances are resolved. He states,

Irrespective of how impatient the therapist may be to deal with symptoms or emerging conflicts, it may be necessary to devote the initial treatment sessions exclusively to the resolution of resistance while observing rules that

⁸Ibid., 1:392.

⁹Ibid., 1:388.

¹⁰Ibid., 1:392.

make a positive consolidation of the working relationship.¹¹

Dealing with these resistances include answering questions that the patient has, dealing thoroughly with various feelings the patient has about coming for therapy and the patient's feelings toward the therapist.

Finally, Wolberg outlines the countertransference problems in the therapist that obstruct the achievement of a working relationship.¹² He includes the following:

1. Inability to sympathize with patient and to communicate in understandable terms with him.
2. Irritability with resistances of patient to accepting therapy and therapist.
3. Inability to extend warmth toward patient and to show him he is accepted and his turmoil understood.¹³

Countertransference can be handled in a number of ways. Self exploration as an attempt to understand the therapist's own dynamics is encouraged.¹⁴ "Where the therapist is unable to control disturbed emotions and attitudes by processes of self observation, in fairness to the patient a referral to another therapist should be made."¹⁵

The initial phase of establishing a warm working relationship with a patient may take from one session to one

¹¹Ibid., 1:393.

¹²Ibid., 1:388, 393.

¹³Ibid., 1:388.

¹⁴Ibid., 1:494.

¹⁵Ibid., 1:495.

or more years.¹⁶ Wolberg describes a warm working relationship by stating that there will be signs of both the therapist liking the client and the client liking the therapist. In the case of the client these signs will be feeling confident in the therapist and feeling relaxed. Both of these will be evidenced in verbal and nonverbal ways.

Evidences of a working relationship from the therapist's point of view are that contact is being made with the patient, that the patient is responding to the therapist, and that the therapist believes that he/she can help the patient regardless of the presenting problem. Once the relationship is established the basis for therapy has been built.

Wesley's Understanding of Original Sin

Wesley's understanding of original sin is the theological foundation upon which all that is written in this dissertation will be based.¹⁷ The fundamental problem with the human race is sinfulness according to Wesley. To describe the depth of human sinfulness he develops the doctrine of original sin. Original sin provides a background from which we can see the overwhelming need of persons to seek out their salvation. This is crucial for Wesley because if an individual does not recognize their sinfulness and the depth and effect of it they will be infected by the disease of sin

¹⁶Ibid., 1:503.

¹⁷Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, 29.

which will "spread itself over the whole man, leaving no part uninfected."¹⁸ Wesley also compared original sin to a malignant disease.¹⁹ Wesley expands on this in his work, "The Doctrine of Original Sin," by claiming, "that actual sin proceeds from original; evil works, from an evil heart...that all outward wickedness proceeds from inward wickedness."²⁰

The implication of this doctrine of original sin is that individuals cannot heal themselves because the disease is so severe. Help from someone or something outside ourselves is necessary if we are to be saved from this disease. God, as the Physician of our souls, offers us the grace needed to be whole, according to Wesley.²¹

What theology can learn from psychoanalytic psychotherapy in terms of understanding the human quandary has been documented by others. How psychotherapy could benefit from a theology of original sin such as Wesley's I will document by using both Albert Outler's thoughts from his books, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message and Theology in a Wesleyan Spirit, and David Robert's book, Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man.

The contention of this paper is that a psychoanalytic

¹⁸John Wesley, Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament (Salem, Ohio: Schmul Publishers, n.d.), 540.

¹⁹John Wesley, The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., ed. Thomas Jackson, 14 vols. (London: Mason, 1829-31), 6:221.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 9:274-75.

²¹*Ibid.*, 8:24.

view of man is inadequate because it makes the assumption that the individual, not God, is their own final moral referent. The psychoanalytic view is that the individual is alone and on their own in determining what is right or wrong. According to this theory, the only problem humankind has is simply one of maladjustment and a breakdown in the human growth process. This description of the human quandary is too superficial. The real problem is our estrangement from God and each other. This is traditionally called original sin. No matter how much psychotherapy we receive, this condition will continue to exist. This predicament in theological language is the Fall, and is universal in everyone in every time. This means that the human condition is not just a weakness that is correctable, but is a more basic problem of estrangement from God, from self and from others.²²

This theological interpretation affirms Wesley's insistence of the primacy of faith and trust in God. It is also echoed in a chapter of David Roberts on "Bondage to Sin." In this chapter Roberts states,

The strongest theological argument, in my judgment, takes the form of holding that Christian belief provides a basis for the affirmation of human possibilities as grounded in God which humanism lacks. In short, a naturalistic or humanistic outlook cannot do justice to the fact that man tends toward his own beatitude only as human good is made integral with its cosmic ground...Hence we have a right to reject any theology which ignores or belittles man's participation; we can even say that man 'creates' value, in the sense that without him it cannot be actualized.

²²Albert C. Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message (New York: Harper and Row, 1954), chapter 3.

But he does not create the resources on which he draws in playing this role.²³

Outler outlines "the difficulties in accepting the Christian account of the depth and malignancy of the human quandary."²⁴ He begins by saying that some would say it "is a denigration of man's worth and native goodness."²⁵ "This view of humankind negates our freedom, encourages unhealthy dependency, and promotes self humiliation."²⁶

A second objection to this radical view of sin is that sin is essentially ignorance.²⁷ Wesley refutes this notion in his writing on The Doctrine of Original Sin. He states,

How is it that the custom of all ages and nations is not on the side of virtue rather than vice? If you say, "This is owing to bad education, which propagates ill customs;" For how am I to account for the almost universal prevalence of this bad education?...In no wise, therefore, can we account for the present state of mankind from example or education.²⁸

Wesley goes on to declare that the cause of evil is not ignorance but Adam's sin.

Another criticism of the Wesleyan doctrine of original sin is that human beings are always fighting their animalistic instincts and impulses and are trying "to make rational

²³David E. Roberts, Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), 115.

²⁴Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message, 135.

²⁵Ibid., 135.

²⁶Ibid., 135.

²⁷Ibid., 135.

²⁸Wesley, Works, 9:238-39.

principles dominant over animal impulses."²⁹ This theory basically states that the more we evolve the smarter and better we become. Wesley refutes this argument generally by stating that original sin is a condition in which all the faculties of understanding, will, and affections have been perverted.³⁰

The key concepts for forming an ontological basis for understanding the process of psychotherapy are: (1) understanding our own sinfulness and sinful nature; (2) the importance of our consciousness of the disease; (3) our need for help from outside of ourselves in order to cure the disease; (4) the hope upon which a cure or transformation is based; and (5) the concepts of free will versus determinism. This fifth concept will also be dealt with primarily under the discussion of prevenient grace.

Wesley, as previously discussed, emphasizes the fact of our sinfulness and the depth of it. Wolberg states, "A disturbed character structure will be found in practically every patient, reflecting itself in difficulties in interpersonal and social relationships."³¹

As Wolberg discusses the severity of individuals' problems in his section called "Dynamics of Therapeutic Change," he states,

²⁹Roberts, 105.

³⁰Wesley, Works, 9:295.

³¹Wolberg, 1:410.

Not realizing that his symptoms stem from deep conflicts of long standing that are presently being reflected in disturbances in relationships with people, he expects rapid results. In this respect he is rather like the obese patient who wants the physician to remove, in two weeks, the excess weight that has taken ten years to accumulate, while at the same time refusing to exercise or diet. The patient seeks to retain fixed ways of dealing with people and situations, which provoke and exaggerate his symptoms, while demanding that the products of his disturbed way of living be quickly extirpated.³²

Both Wesley and Wolberg agree on the fact that the problems of human nature are extensive. However, it is clear that Wesley categorizes all persons in need of help. Wolberg, on the other hand, is unclear at this point. He seems to suggest that some persons do not have a disturbed character structure.

David E. Roberts in Psychotherapy and a Christian View of Man deals with this issue in the following way. "The refusal to admit how deeply wrong he is, and how much he needs help, is symptomatic of the basic problem."³³ He goes on to say, "The motive behind it is to reach full awareness of the depth of the human problem."³⁴

This is precisely the contribution Wesley's doctrine of original sin has to offer Wolberg's schema of psychotherapy. Wesley's thought on original sin is outlined in his sermon, "Justification by Faith," as a universal description of the condition of all persons. Original sin

³²Ibid., 1:354.

³³Roberts, 108.

³⁴Ibid., 108.

infects us completely through Adam's fall and separates us from God, self, and others.³⁵ Wesley's concern that the depth of the disease must be realized before a cure can take place is as accurate in a religious sense as it is in a psychotherapeutic sense. Wolberg confirms this generally when he claims, "Before progress can be made it will be necessary for the patient to realize his symptoms are not independent manifestations; rather they are manifestations of problems of which he is only partially aware of some."³⁶ From Wolberg we see that individuals have deep-seated emotional problems and that they are generally unaware of the depth and breadth of these problems. Wesley's theology of original sin explicates the implicit theological assumptions about our alienation from ourselves and from others. Wesley's belief is that original sin also separates us from God and this is the basis for all other broken relationships. Our relationship with God is the basic and final reality that we confront in life.

In other words, the understanding of our brokenness is grounded in our understanding of our broken relationship with God. Wesley expands the assumptions about our brokenness to include a religious dimension that makes alienation and brokenness a universal problem.

³⁵John Wesley, John Wesley's Fifty-Three Sermons, ed. Edward H. Sugden (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 78. Used by permission.

³⁶Wolberg, 1:354-55.

The previous statement of Wolberg's introduces the second area of Wesley's thought about original sin that provides an ontological basis for understanding psychotherapy. This is the emphasis on the importance of our consciousness of the disease or problem. Wesley "puts the chief emphasis on the awareness of sin rather than on sin as an objective fact."³⁷ According to Lindstrom this awareness or consciousness of sinfulness is the first step in the process of salvation.³⁸

In psychoanalytic psychotherapy a premium is put on the patient's ability to understand and be aware of their own dynamics. Wolberg states,

Through verbalization the patient becomes aware of the forces within himself that produce his symptoms and interfere with successful adaptation. On the basis of this understanding he then proceeds to challenge those designs that interfere with his adjustment and to substitute for them mature patterns that will gratify basic biologic and social needs.³⁹

Wolberg goes on to say,

The individual who is being treated under the aegis of this dynamic model is, through a number of techniques, taught to recognize his offensive patterns and their consequences...Awareness of stress sources and conflicts enables him better to challenge his current maladaptive patterns.⁴⁰

This awareness of having a problem is the first basic

³⁷Harald Lindstrom, Wesley and Sanctification (London: Epworth Press, n.d.), 32.

³⁸Ibid., 33.

³⁹Wolberg, 1:358.

⁴⁰Ibid., 1:45.

step to recovery both in Wolberg's schema and in Wesley's order of salvation. In this particular area it can be seen that Wolberg's psychotherapeutic process presupposes an assumption that is explicit in Wesley's order of salvation.

Wesley understands that a central feature of the human quandary is that the individual is not even aware of their own fallenness. The individual is unaware of their estrangement and therefore cannot correct the problem. Once the problem of their estrangement from God is recognized, a need for help is also recognized. In this way Wesley's development of the individual's need to be aware of their basic condition becomes a norm from which to compare Wolberg's understanding of the human condition.

The third area in which Wesley provides an ontological basis for understanding psychotherapy is in our need for help to come from outside of ourselves in order to solve problems. In Wesley's thought it is God who heals the soul. God, "the Great Physician of Souls applies medicines to heal this sickness."⁴¹ God's offer of salvation by grace through faith is the cure for this disease.

Wolberg, on the other hand, suggests another type of physician, a psychiatrist, is needed to provide the cure through inculcating insight. Wesley's formula shows the impossibility of a cure without God's help. Wolberg shows the improbability of a cure without the psychotherapist's help.

⁴¹Wesley, 2:210.

Wesley's thought at this particular point is clearly more broad in its perspective, while Wolberg is focusing on only a portion of the scope with which Wesley deals. The point at which they agree is that for a cure to take place an outside party would have to intervene.

A fourth area in which Wesley's view of original sin provides us with a basis for understanding implicit assumptions made by Wolberg is the hope upon which a cure or transformation is based.

Wesley's view of original sin provides us with a realistic view of the human condition. Wesley clearly states that people are unable to change the way they are. They are stuck with accepting themselves as less than what they want to be.

Once the individual recognizes their alienation from God they also see they have no escape from their condition. They must become dependent upon God for their salvation. This premise of Wesley helps to explicate Wolberg's assumption that we cannot heal ourselves -- we need the help of a therapist. We are dependent on a source from outside ourselves for our own healing.

This perspective on the human quandary is quite helpful when viewing people from a psychological perspective. Generally, from a psychoanalytic perspective, the human personality is seen as being determined by a number of factors. These would include childhood experiences, genetic

factors, and family influences.

An individual cannot change these completely, or control outside influences and situations that may create an atmosphere in which old symptoms and problems may re-occur. However, the individual can be taught "to engage in self-observation and to challenge neurotic patterns should they return, both by trying to understand what brought them back and by actively resisting and reversing them."⁴²

Again, Wesley's understanding that people cannot overcome their humanness by moral rectitude or by their own self determinism and use of their own will is implied by Wolberg. Eternal vigilance and effort are important but only in the context of prevenient grace. The restoration of our broken relationship with God, caused by our sinfulness, can only be repaired by God.

The limitations we face in our own ability to be more than we are presently are constantly being run up against by each individual. The individual's free will or degree to which they can determine their own lives is restricted. Individuals are freed from their self restrictions when they can embrace their humanness and admit their inability to radically change. Once the individual can see their limitations, it gives them freedom to accept themselves as they are and frees them to stop trying to be something they cannot be.

⁴²Wolberg, 1:755.

All of us are bound by these limitations and restrictions both psychologically and emotionally. We quickly come to see we are not self-determined, but that forces greater than ourselves have determined us. As we see, and admit, our inability to change and the insignificance of our efforts, we begin to realize we are not only dependent on others for what we are and have become, but also for what we can be.

This principal is much more eloquently formulated and stated by Albert Outler when he states,

Who or what could possibly deliver us from this primordial tragedy without robbing us of our freedom and thus also of our full humanity? The only answer I can think of (or have ever heard of), not already clearly falsified in human experience itself over the decades and centuries, is some sort of active intervention in our lives and in our human history by that purpose and power of whatever or whoever it was that ever intended us to be free and joyous and loving to begin with.⁴³

The hope upon which a cure is based is that someone outside of ourself (God) will actively intervene in a way that will help us pull ourselves out of the quagmire in which we are stuck. Wesley believes this outside source can only be God and the grace he bestows upon us through faith. This belief becomes the norm by which we again explicate Wolberg's understanding that we must depend on an outside source, a psychotherapist, as the catalyst for changing ourselves. In Wolberg's understanding of our need to be dependent on the therapist is an implicit theological assumption about our

⁴³Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, 42.

dependency on God as being the vehicle through which we extricate ourselves from our sinful nature.

A fifth concept that forms an ontological basis for understanding Wolberg's process of psychotherapy is the issue of free will versus determinism as developed by Wesley. Wesley's view of free will and determinism is based on divine grace. He staunchly opposed those who would claim persons were self determined. However, in his work, "Thoughts Upon Necessity," he just as staunchly opposed those who claimed human behavior was determined neurologically or by any principle exterior to themselves. Otherwise, Wesley argued, there would be no moral good or evil.⁴⁴

Wesley's view of the inherent sinfulness of humankind was the basis for the need for divine grace. The source of sin was the Fall. Because of the Fall our inward and outward natures are corrupt. It was only through this grace that one could become fully human. It was God's grace upon which the nobility of persons is based. Through God's grace we are raised from the quagmire of sin into an ability to choose whether or not we will respond to God's will or not.

As Outler says,

what is original here is Wesley's stout upholding of the sovereignty of grace but not its irresistibility - and this distinction deserves more pondering than it usually gets. Sinners can do literally nothing to save themselves (not by merit, nor demerit, nor by the will to believe). And yet God's intention in creating persons (which gives each person his/her unique identity) is not thwarted by

⁴⁴Outler, John Wesley, 474.

human resistance, because it is God's own purpose that the offer of grace shall be experienced as optional. The chief function of prevenient grace, therefore, is to stir the sinner to repentance (which is to say, to a valid self-understanding of his/her sinfulness). Thus, Wesley can speak of repentance as the porch of religion, of faith as the door, and of holiness as religion itself.⁴⁵

In a religious sense the freedom to choose has been abused or interpreted to mean total power. Some take it to mean that they have the power and ability to provide their own sense of well being. This critical mistake is the basis from which many other troubles and sins come.

However, the other extreme of believing that we are completely determined by outside forces is just as false according to Wesley.⁴⁶ Wesley sees the tension between free will and determinism as a balance.

Wesley describes this balance between free will and determinism in his sermon, "What is Man?" In this sermon he contends,

And although I have no absolute power over my own mind, because of the corruption of my own nature; yet, through the grace of God assisting me, I have power to choose and do good, as well as evil. I am free to choose whom I will serve; and if I choose the better part, to continue therein unto death.⁴⁷

Until an individual is able to determine this balance in his/her relationship to the world they will be living in a position of estrangement from themselves, others, and from

⁴⁵Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, 37-38.

⁴⁶Outler, John Wesley, 472.

⁴⁷Wesley, Works, 7:229

reality itself. Without this balance, then, psychological and emotional health, as well as spiritual health, would not be possible.

Frequently, in the early stages of therapy clients refuse to see their own free agency -- their own ability to choose. They believe they are determined by forces outside themselves. Many times clients will blame their parents for their poor adjustment. In marital therapy spouses blame their partner for their discomfort. Some clients even point a finger at society and culture as the reason they cannot exercise free choice.

Psychoanalytic thought proposes that an individual may be determined by many forces as he/she grows up, but that the individual is responsible for any continuing effects these forces have on them presently. The individual can also change his/her relationship to those past forces.

The idea of responsibility is a key issue in understanding free will. In psychotherapy, as in Wesleyan theology, clients are expected to be responsible for their own growth.

In fact, it can be said that little or no growth can occur until clients begin to take some responsibility for their predicament. The paradox that arises around the issue of individual's responsibility for themselves is that "their inner conflicts have become too much for them and they need help from becoming a slave to destructive emotions. Yet

except he retain the responsibility for his problem, he cannot be helped."⁴⁸

Finally, Wesley's opinion on the power of real choice is really founded on grace. If we take advantage of God's grace we can conquer the inclination to evil.⁴⁹ Or as Lindstrom quotes Wesley: "If despite this privilege, man prefers to allow the inclination to evil of original sin and thus commits personal sin, he must be regarded as being himself responsible for this transgression."⁵⁰

Even though we have only a small margin of freedom, it is our responsibility to use this freedom. It is this freedom that allows us our creativity and uniqueness as individuals. To avoid this responsibility is to remain condemned to repeat the past in ways that continue our pain and anxiety and alienate us from both God and humankind.

Wesley's understanding of the depth of meaning of this issue provides a great resource for our understanding of choice in the process of psychotherapy. Wesley gives a theological basis for what therapists intuitively know: that clients have great difficulty realizing they have freedom and even greater difficulty in using that freedom responsibly.

Wesley's understanding of free will and determinism

⁴⁸William E. Hulme, Counseling and Theology (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1956), 106.

⁴⁹Lindstrom, 37.

⁵⁰Ibid., 37. See also Wesley, Works, 5:275.

provides a theological assumption that helps to derive a psychotherapeutic principle of choice, or the freedom to choose. The principle of choice is based on the theological principle of free will as it has been developed by Wesley.

Wesley's Understanding of Atonement

The therapeutic process limits itself strictly to the assumption that some accepting reality is being mediated through a special interpersonal relationship, without braving the question of the source of acceptance as a fundamental question of being.⁵¹

In Chapter 3 of Thomas Oden's book Kerygma and Counseling, he discusses "The Theology of Carl Rogers." In this chapter Oden claims that, "Rogers develops a soteriology without a Christology, i.e., a view of the saving process without an historical event which once for all manifests and defines that saving process and gives the history of salvation a center in time and space."⁵²

Oden's assumption is that the doctrine of atonement gives "a particular historical event in which we are once and for all unconditionally valued amid our value losses."⁵³ He asks the question of what atonement adds to secular theories and concludes,

It frees us from demonic, self-destructive guilt through atonement: God's son dies for our sins. We are freed from guilt-laden idolatry by being shown that the One who gives both creaturehood and finitude, and finally the One

⁵¹Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 110.

⁵²Ibid., 110-11.

⁵³Thomas C. Oden, Guilt Free (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 116.

who takes it all away in death, has made himself known as trustworthy. If I am unconditionally valued amid my value negations, I am freed from the harried need to defend myself; freed to hear the neighbor's claim. The self-deceptive rigidities under which guilt has carried on its clandestine operations are themselves disarmed by this freeing Word.⁵⁴

What Oden argues about the importance of atonement is that atonement allows us to affirm ourselves in a more basic way than secular theories or humanistic theories allow.⁵⁵

Don Browning deals with this same issue in his book Atonement and Psychotherapy. Browning uses analogical thinking to deal with atonement as a theological basis for understanding the idea of empathic understanding and acceptance in psychotherapy. In his chapter titled, "Some Methodological Considerations," Browning states,

The possibility of the therapist accepting the client is based on an intuition of a prior or a priori ground with reference to which the client is actually accepted.....we imagine the possibility of accepting the client because of a prior intuition that he is acceptable to something that transcends us both.⁵⁶

Browning later comes to the same conclusion as Oden when he states,

It must be remembered that God's acceptance precedes and constitutes the ground, possibility, and ultimate measure of the therapist's acceptance even though analysis of the smaller, empirically discernable acceptance of the therapist may serve to sharpen our understanding of the actual structure and dynamics of God's acceptance.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Ibid., 117.

⁵⁵Ibid., 117.

⁵⁶Browning, Atonement and Psychotherapy, 153.

⁵⁷Ibid., 161.

In Chapter 7 Browning defines how atonement becomes the ontology for understanding empathic acceptance.⁵⁸

The question for this paper becomes how does John Wesley's doctrine of atonement inform our understanding of empathic acceptance in the process of psychotherapy outlined by Wolberg.

For Wesley,

The sole cause of our acceptance with God (or, that for the sake of which, on the account of which, we are accepted) is the righteousness and death of Christ, who fulfilled God's law, and died in our stead.⁵⁹

He accentuates this thought in his sermon, "The Lord Our Righteousness," when he claims, "all believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of anything in them, or anything that ever was...or ever can be done by them, but wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ hath done and suffered for them."⁶⁰

Wesley uses an Anselmic formula for understanding the doctrine of atonement. According to Lindstrom, Wesley's understanding of atonement "is in alignment with the orthodox doctrine of satisfaction."⁶¹ This means atonement is seen by Wesley from the point of view of grace and justice. God's grace is the basis of our justification through the atonement.

⁵⁸Ibid., chap.7, 174-213.

⁵⁹Wesley, Works, 14:320.

⁶⁰Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 713.

⁶¹Lindstrom, 62.

The concept of justice is developed by Colin W. Williams writing in John Wesley's Theology Today. He labels this view as the Penal Substitutionary Theory. In this formula the concepts of justice and the law are more primary than in other theories. He describes Wesley's theology of the atonement in the following way:

God subjects us to the law of his justice, so that as a result of our separation from him we are revealed as 'sold under sin.' Under this first covenant, the law is seen as God's instrument for bringing us to a knowledge of our guilt, and God's wrath is seen as his means for bringing us to a recognition of our total need for his mercy. With this revelation of our guilt and our need for God's mercy, the covenant of works has fulfilled its task and points us on to the covenant of grace which God has established by providing his Son as the satisfaction for our guilt and the satisfier of his wrath.⁶²

What Wesley uniquely offers us from his more traditional theological thinking is a set of assumptions that afford us a firm understanding of human relationships. Other theories avoid the hard facts that for change to occur psychotherapeutically the individual must not only feel accepted and re-experience incongruent or unhealthy patterns, but must also face the consequences their behavior has had on other persons. Wesley clearly sees our sinfulness has caused God's wrath toward us. In order to satisfy this wrath a change in our attitude and behavior is necessary. In psychotherapy the therapist may confront a client's behavior by sharing the effect that behavior has on both the client's

⁶²Colin W. Williams, John Wesley's Theology Today (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), 84.

relationship to the therapist as well as the effect it has on other relationships. In this sense Wesley's "Penal Substitutionary Theory" as described by Williams, provides an ontological basis for understanding cause and effect in relationships with clients and in everyday life.

Wolberg speaks at some length throughout his book on the necessity of acceptance. He claims,

The maintenance of a tolerant, accepting, permissive attitude will eventually convince the patient that the therapist's role is to help the patient to understand himself, not to hold him in judgment. This unqualified, sympathetic acceptance enables the patient to explore further within himself and his environment the sources of his troubles and helps him to bring up material difficult to verbalize even to himself. The calm scrutiny of his productions, with absence of praise, surprise, blame, or shock cuts deeply into the defenses of the patient, helping to expose the most disturbing and painful conflicts.⁶³

Wolberg also states that "There is a need for faith in the basic goodness of human beings, in the potentialities that all people possess for personality growth and maturity."⁶⁴

Though Wolberg makes these type of statements throughout his presentation on psychotherapy he never identifies the source of this faith. He assumes this need for faith in the goodness of people and their acceptability.

It is clear in the Christian faith where the basis for this type of assumption lies. All persons are accepted because of the atonement. The atonement is "the meritorious

⁶³Wolberg, 1:381.

⁶⁴Ibid., 1:382.

cause or ground of human justification."⁶⁵ It is because of the atonement, because of Christ's merits we are given grace.⁶⁶ "The center of all classical theories of atonement is: God himself takes our place, and takes our guilt upon himself."⁶⁷

Daniel Day Williams, in his book The Minister and the Care of Souls, gives an interpretation of atonement which I believe to be very helpful.⁶⁸ In this work Williams states "The traditional doctrines of atonement have all been founded on something less than a fully personal analysis of the meaning of forgiveness."⁶⁹ The issues of forgiveness and guilt are at the heart of the doctrine of atonement.

According to Wesley, everyone is guilty through their relationship to Adam. Because of our inherent sinfulness and our sinful actions, our guilt is always before us. This guilt is incurred with God and is alleviated only by God through the atonement.

Lindstrom notes, "Forgiveness, as a factor in

⁶⁵Wesley, Works, 10:313.

⁶⁶It is important to note here that Christ's work of atonement is the source of grace. For this particular study, this implies that atonement precedes prevenient grace in an order of salvation. For documentation refer to Lindstrom, 49, or Colin Williams, 87.

⁶⁷Oden, Guilt Free, 118.

⁶⁸Daniel Day Williams, The Minister and the Care of Souls (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), 87-92.

⁶⁹Ibid., 87.

atonement, is the source of salvation."⁷⁰ Lindstrom goes on to quote from Wesley's "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," stating, "Pardoning love is still at the root of all. He who was offended is now reconciled."⁷¹

What Daniel Day Williams is saying needs to be done in re-interpreting the various theories of atonement, can be seen in Wesley's doctrine of the atonement.

Daniel Day Williams contends that the problem of our guilt is met in the New Testament by the personal experience of forgiveness.⁷² He goes on to say,

The person who cannot solve his own problem discovers one who will stand by him in spite of the burden of guilt or fear, whatever it may be. The person who is accepted does not earn this. He has no claim upon it. It is offered. It is grace.⁷³

Secondly, Williams says that these traditional doctrines of atonement "tend to make the calculus of punishment more fundamental than the creative action of love."⁷⁴ He continues by asserting that

the element of judgment is not eliminated, but it is subordinate to the creation of a new possibility of life on new terms. Acceptance is not simply a passive reception of the other. It is a reconstruction of the situation, a breaking open both of our need and of our way to health. From this point of view, the meaning of the atoning work of God never has the calculus of guilt as its

⁷⁰Lindstrom, 41.

⁷¹Ibid., 41. See also Wesley, Works, 8:24.

⁷²Daniel Day Williams, 88.

⁷³Ibid., 88.

⁷⁴Ibid., 89.

principal theme. It is the reconstructive action of God beyond all measure of guilt.⁷⁵

In summary, Williams states that "Forgiveness is the offer to stand by and to love no matter what happens."⁷⁶ Wesley implies this same principle throughout his discussions of Christian love.⁷⁷ Daniel Day Williams' thoughts about atonement certainly provide a basis for understanding the type of acceptance that Lewis R. Wolberg suggests in his work. Williams says that acceptance helps us break open the way to health. This same sentiment is echoed in the previous quote from Wolberg.

Wesley's understanding of atonement confirms both the idea of acceptance and the idea of the effect of our sinfulness on others.

Wesley's doctrine of atonement provides an understanding of acceptance that becomes a basis from which to understand acceptance as Wolberg develops it. In other words, Wesley's theology defines the basis upon which individuals are ultimately acceptable. In this sense God's acceptance becomes the ground from which a therapist's acceptance of a patient is understood.

Wesley' Concept of Prevenient Grace

In describing prevenient grace Wesley is describing

⁷⁵Ibid., 90.

⁷⁶Ibid., 92.

⁷⁷Lindstrom, 174-97.

God's initiative in our lives. Prevenient grace is the "first dawning of grace in the soul."⁷⁸

In his sermon, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," Wesley states, "Salvation begins with what is usually termed (and very properly) preventing grace; including the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight transient conviction of having sinned against him."⁷⁹

The source of prevenient grace is the atonement. This grace is available to everyone. No one is totally devoid of God's grace. "No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called natural conscience. But this is not natural: It is more properly termed, preventing grace. Every man has a greater or less measure of this...."⁸⁰

This natural conscience is a gift from God and is used by Wesley with the concept of prevenient grace. In his sermon, "On Conscience," Wesley defines conscience as "that faculty wherby we are at once conscious of our own thoughts, words, and actions; and of their merit or demerit, of their being good or bad...."⁸¹ This conscience becomes an "inward check"⁸² for our thoughts, words, and deeds.

⁷⁸Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 723.

⁷⁹Wesley, Works, 6:509.

⁸⁰Ibid., 7:373.

⁸¹Ibid., 7:187.

⁸²Ibid., 7:188.

In this section my intent is to establish conscience as a part of prevenient grace in Wesley. Then conscience will be compared to insight in psychotherapy.

Charles Allen Rogers, writing in his study, The Concept Of Prevenient Grace in the Theology of John Wesley, makes this statement about prevenient grace:

it is the source of a faculty of conscience to which the grace of God may address itself and bring man to a knowledge of his corrupt condition. Through prevenient grace man has the possibility of self knowledge. This is the first point to be made concerning the significance of Wesley's concept of prevenient grace.⁸³

This gift of self-perception through the workings of the conscience is described by Wesley in his sermon, "On Conscience." He claims,

To take a more direct view of conscience, it appears to have a three-fold office: First. It is a witness, - testifying what we have done, in thought, or word, or action. Secondly. It is a judge, - passing sentence on what we have done, that it is good or evil. And, Thirdly, it, in some sort, executes the sentence by occasioning a degree of complacency in him that does well, and a degree of uneasiness in him that does evil.⁸⁴

According to Rogers, "Prevenient grace is the theological foundation for Wesley's insistence both on the doctrine of justification by grace alone and on the possibility of human involvement and participation."⁸⁵

⁸³Charles Allen Rogers, "The Concept of Prevenient Grace in the Theology of John Wesley" (Th.D. diss., School of Theology at Claremont, 1968), 287.

⁸⁴Wesley, Works, 7:188.

⁸⁵Rogers, 289.

The importance of conscience in the doctrine of prevenient grace and in Wesley's soteriology is well documented by Rogers.⁸⁶ Rogers elucidates this by saying,

Prevenient grace, for Wesley, provides the power and possibility for man's involvement in the process of sanctification, but does not contradict his insistence that sanctification is entirely the work of grace in man.⁸⁷

One of the analogies that can be developed through the doctrine of prevenient grace and psychotherapy is between conscience's function in prevenient grace and the function and role of insight in psychotherapy.

Insight in psychotherapy performs a similar function as conscience does in the order of salvation. For a person to be able to move through the process of salvation they need to be attuned to the workings of their conscience. Through conscience,

Man is able to know his moral condition in the light of the law which encounters the conscience, and to judge himself regarding his moral state, arriving in consequence, at a sense either of approval and satisfaction or disapproval and uneasiness.⁸⁸

People have the ability to resist their conscience and deny the reality to which it points (free will).

In Wolberg's chapter, "Translating Insight Into Action," he discusses the problems associated with inculcating

⁸⁶Ibid., 230.

⁸⁷Ibid., 290.

⁸⁸Ibid., 230.

insight to patients.⁸⁹ He states,

A basic assumption in insight approaches is one made originally by Freud that was to the effect that once the individual becomes aware of his unconscious motivations, he can then alter his behavior and get well. That this fortunate consequence does not always follow (a circumstance also recognized by Freud) is the disillusioning experience of many young therapists who have predicated their futures on the premise that analysis of resistances will inevitably bring forth insight and cure like a sunbeam breaking through a cloud. The fact that a patient acquires a basic understanding of his problems and delves into their origins as far back as childhood, does not in the least guarantee that he either will or can do anything about them. Even if an incentive to change is present, there are some patterns that cling to a person obstinately as if they derive from a world beyond the reach of reason and common sense.⁹⁰

Wolberg continues to develop his thoughts on insight by stating,

Improvement or cure in psychotherapy may be posited on the following propositions:

1. The patient successfully acquires an understanding of the nature of his problem by developing the capacity to conceive of it in terms that are meaningful to him.
2. On the basis of his understanding, he begins to organize a campaign of positive action. He acquires symbolic controls, replaces destructive with adaptive goals, and pursues these in a productive way.

True insight is helpful in this process. It acts as a liberating and an enabling force; it upsets the balance between the repressed and repressing psychic elements; it creates motivations to test the reality of one's attitudes and values; it gives the person an opportunity to challenge the very philosophies with which he governs his life. But insight is not the equivalent to cure; by itself it is insufficient to arrest the neurotic process and to promote new and constructive patterns.⁹¹

Wesley and Wolberg both understand that this process

⁸⁹Wolberg, chapter 46, 2:636-51.

⁹⁰Ibid., 2:636.

⁹¹Ibid., 2:637.

may not be comfortable for the individual. As Wolberg contends,

Indeed, the development of insight may surprisingly produce not relief from distress, but an accentuation of anxiety. The ensuing challenge to change one's modus operandi, and the sloughing off of neurotic protective devices make the possibility of exposure to hurt all the more real. No longer is one capable of hiding behind one's defense mechanisms. One must tear down one's facades and proceed to tackle life on assertive terms. Prior to acquiring insight, one may have envisaged "normality" in fantasy as a desirable quality, but the approaching new way of life fills the individual with a sense of impending doom.⁹²

Wesley also understands the pain attending to the workings of the conscience and the feelings of being unable to help himself. Wesley sees this sense of inner despair as necessary for repentance and forgiveness to occur.

Both Wesley and Wolberg agree that the pull of the conscience and insight may be, and frequently are, resisted by the individual. For Wesley the individual always has the free will to resist God's callings. Wolberg, on the other hand, understands this process as resistance. He claims, "It is an unfortunate fact that only too often does therapy grind to a halt at a point where insight must be converted into action."⁹³

Wesley's doctrine of prevenient grace, and particularly that of conscience provides an effective ontology for understanding the importance particularly of insight and a

⁹²Ibid., 2:637-38.

⁹³Wolberg, 2:638.

person's own self knowledge in order for the process toward health and wholeness to continue.

John Wesley's doctrine of prevenient grace provides us with the philosophical underpinnings of how an individual is confronted with their own dysfunction by its understandings of the concept of conscience. As Wesley says,

Conscience is that faculty of the soul which, by the assistance of the grace of God, sees at one and the same time, (1) Our own tempers and lives, - the real nature and quality of our thoughts, words, and actions; (2) The rule whereby we are to be directed; and (3) The agreement or disagreement therewith. To express this a little more largely: Conscience implies, First, the faculty a man has of knowing himself; of discerning, both in general and in particular, his own tempers, thoughts, words and actions. But this is not possible for him to do, without the assistance of the Spirit of God.... It implies, Secondly, a knowledge of the rule whereby he is to be directed in every particular; which is no other than the written word of God. Conscience implies, Thirdly, a knowledge that all his thoughts, and words, and actions are conformable to that rule. In all the offices of conscience, the 'unction of the Holy One' is indispensably needful. Without this, neither could we clearly discern our lives or tempers; nor could we judge of the rule whereby we are to walk, or of our conformity or disconformity to it.⁹⁴

Essentially, prevenient grace empowers us to live in a new way just as a client's new understandings can create dissatisfaction in their present life situation, motivating the client to experiment with different modes of adjustment.⁹⁵

Through prevenient grace we are confronted by God with our weaknesses and sinfulness. Through our conscience we see ourselves as we really are for the first time. We understand

⁹⁴Wesley, Works, 7:189-90.

⁹⁵Wolberg, 2:642.

that we are responsible for our selves, our behavior, and our sinfulness. There is no one to blame for our condition but ourselves. We now have the free-will to decide whether or not we want to change our lives.

In this way prevenient grace provides an ontology for understanding the early stages of therapy when the patient is confronted with their own neurotic patterns through the inculcation of insight.

Prevenient grace becomes a norm from which to compare the concept of insight in Wolberg. This prevenient grace calls us to be what we are meant to be. In a similar way the psychotherapist through the inculcation of insight helps the patient to discover their real self and move toward wholeness. In spite of dissimilarities between prevenient grace, conscience, and the concept of insight, by using the analogical process similarities can be seen between the two.

Chapter Summary

John Wesley's theology of original sin, atonement, and prevenient grace offer a unique resource in explicating theological assumptions hidden in the process of psychotherapy. The implicit theological assumptions that are hidden in Wolberg's initial phase of psychotherapy are: the depth of the problems the patient brings into psychotherapy; the concept of choice the patient has whether to face their predicament; the need for help to come from outside of the patient; the patient's need to be in an accepting, or warm

working relationship in order to receive help; and the need to have insight into problem areas.

The Initial Phase of psychotherapy as described by Lewis R. Wolberg does embody implicit theological assumptions, which when critiqued from a Wesleyan point of view, help us to affirm the fact of our faith that God can be seen to be involved in this phase of psychotherapy.

The importance of Wesley's theology can be seen in the way it adds depth and breadth to the psychological understandings outlined by Wolberg. Wesley's theology of Original Sin helps us to see the religious and theological issues involved in understanding the depth of our human predicament, the importance of our consciousness of the disease, the responsibility and freedom we have to face this predicament, and the hope upon which a change in ourselves is based.

The theology of John Wesley helps us to re-affirm that the process of psychotherapy is not based either upon the client's doing or performing any specific tasks, or the therapist using any particular technique, but is based on the love and grace God gives us to overcome our sinfulness.

This can be seen most directly in the development of Wesley's understanding of atonement as the basis for acceptance of persons in psychotherapy.

Wesley's doctrine of atonement also affirms the importance of our recognizing the effect our behavior has on

others. Recognizing these effects and facing their consequences as well as changing our behavior and attitudes are implied in Wesley's doctrine of atonement.

Becoming aware of the need to change is developed by Wesley in his concept of prevenient grace. Conscience, as a part of prevenient grace is the basis for self knowledge and participation in the process of salvation as well as the process of psychotherapy. Wesley's idea of conscience becomes a philosophical and theological basis for understanding the concept of insight in Wolberg.

Through the doctrines of original sin, atonement, and prevenient grace, John Wesley has provided an ontology for understanding the Initial Phase of Treatment as developed by Lewis R. Wolberg.

CHAPTER 2

The Middle Phase of Psychotherapy

In this chapter Wesley's concepts of repentance, justification, new birth and assurance will be used as a basis for understanding Lewis R. Wolberg's middle phase of psychotherapy. The middle phase of psychotherapy as developed by Wolberg will first be outlined. Then John Wesley's theological views on repentance, justification, new birth and assurance will be used to explicate the hidden theological assumptions in the middle phase of treatment. By asking theological questions of the process of psychotherapy theological answers will be derived.

Wolberg's Middle Phase of Psychotherapy¹

Wolberg begins describing this phase of treatment by stating, " This stage has as one of its objectives the revelation of what is behind the patients symptoms and behavior."² Another way Wolberg explains this issue is by saying that this phase of psychotherapy has as one of its goals "determining the causes and dynamics of the patient's disorder."³

In his "Outline of Psychotherapy" Wolberg states that

¹Wolberg, 1:523-2:740.

²Ibid., 1:523.

³Ibid., 1:387.

the therapeutic tasks are:

Delineating and exploring environmental frustrations and interpersonal drives through interviewing and unconscious conflicts that mobilize anxiety and vitiate basic needs through psychoanalytic techniques of free association, dream interpretation, analysis of the transference, and the exploration of genetic material.⁴

Wolberg believes that "important trends and patterns"⁵ need to be identified and explored before the patient is ready to move toward a cure or change. Included in this exploratory phase are the handling of resistances to a cure⁶ and handling transference issues.⁷

Wolberg outlines these resistances as:

1. Guilt in acknowledging environmental disturbance or interpersonal difficulty.
2. Unwillingness and, in the instance of a weak ego, an inability to face and master anxieties related to unconscious conflicts, strivings, and fears.⁸

Wolberg also includes these resistances:

1. Resistance to abandoning primary and secondary neurotic gains.
2. Resistance to normality.
3. Resistance to activity through own resources.⁹

After these trends and patterns have been explored and the resistances worked through, the patient is well on a way

⁴Ibid., 1:387.

⁵Wolberg uses these terms as headings for chapters 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40.

⁶Ibid., chapter 44, 2:609-28.

⁷Ibid., chapter 45, 2:629-35.

⁸Ibid., 1:388.

⁹Ibid., 1:388.

to a cure. This part of the Middle Phase of treatment has the objective of "Translating Insight into Action."¹⁰ This includes "instituting corrective measures."¹¹ By this Wolberg is saying that the client will take steps to change old behavior patterns. Some of these changes are described by Wolberg in his chapter called "The Working-through Process."¹²

The therapeutic tasks that need to be addressed in this part of the Middle Phase of psychotherapy are:

1. Creating incentives for change.
2. Dealing with forces that block action.
3. Helping patient to master anxieties surrounding normal life goals.
4. Correction of remediable environmental distortions.
5. Helping patient to adjust to irremediable conditions.
6. Symptom removal (behavioral therapy) where immediate correction is urgent.
7. Adjustment to those symptoms and abnormal character patterns that for one reason or another cannot be removed during current therapeutic effort.¹³

Wolberg summarizes the changes a therapist hopes to effect in a client by saying,

What a therapist hopes to effect in reconstructive therapy is a building of security in the person so that that individual no longer feels menaced by fears of the world. In addition, self-esteem must be enhanced to the point of self-confidence, assertiveness, and creative self-fulfillment. Each individual must gain respect for oneself without striving for perfectionism or superiority. Relationships with people must become capable of satisfying inner needs and demands without anxiety and

¹⁰Ibid., chapter 46, 1:636-51.

¹¹Ibid., 1:387.

¹²Ibid., chapter 47, 2:652-64.

¹³Ibid., 1:387.

in conformity with standards of the group.¹⁴

Wolberg continues his discussion by outlining the steps that must be taken to reach the aforementioned changes and goals. The process of change is one of the patient's progressive understanding of the operative forces within themselves that cause dysfunction. Wolberg describes this process by outlining the sequence in which this progressive understanding usually occurs. He describes these mechanics of therapeutic change by outlining the entire process the individual goes through from the beginning of therapy to the final outcome of personality reconstruction. He outlines the sequence in the following way:

1. Elaboration by the patient of symptoms and complaints.
2. Discussion of feelings associated with symptoms.
3. Relation of feelings to dissatisfactions with the environment.
4. Recognition of repetitive patterns of behavior and appreciation of their responsibility for disturbed feelings.
5. Awareness of dissatisfaction with behavior patterns, but realization of their compulsive persistence.
6. Cognizance of the functional nature of behavior patterns.
7. Exploration of preponderant patterns and the determination of their origin in early relationships.
8. Disclosure of the archaic nature of the patient's disturbing life trends and mechanisms of defense.
9. Challenging of early attitudes.
10. Serious consideration of rights to a more productive life.
11. Intense dissatisfaction with current patterns, insecurities, and devalued self-esteem.
12. Experimentation with new modes of behavior.
13. Liberation from old values and types of actions.
14. Evolution of greater security, assertiveness, self esteem, and a sense of mastery.

¹⁴Ibid., 1:524.

15. Development of a different conception of oneself, of more constructive interpersonal relationships, and of greater capacities for expression of biologic and social needs.¹⁵

Wolberg also outlines countertransference problems in the therapist and ways these can be manifested in the therapeutic milieu.¹⁶ I am not outlining these issues here because of their limited value in this present study.

To summarize, the Middle Phase of Psychotherapy is one of the patient and the therapist identifying important trends and patterns in the patient's life. These trends and patterns are then explored in depth. Finally, they are worked through in order to replace them or modify them with new and healthy ways of being and relating.

Repentance before Justification

Wesley is very clear that in order to be justified one must repent. In his sermon, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation," he says, "Salvation is carried on by convincing grace, usually in Scripture termed repentance; which brings a larger measure of self-knowledge, and a farther deliverance from a heart of stone."¹⁷ In the sermon, "The Way to the Kingdom," Wesley claims that once the person knows the depth of their corruption and sin and understands they deserve

¹⁵Ibid., 1:524-25.

¹⁶Ibid., 1:388.

¹⁷Wesley, Works, 6:509.

nothing but the wrath of God, then they are ready to repent.¹⁸

In this same sermon Wesley describes repentance in the following way,

And first, repent; that is, know yourselves. This is the first repentance, previous to faith; even conviction, or self-knowledge. Awake then, thou that sleepest. Know thyself to be a sinner, and what manner of sinner thou art.¹⁹

There is a deepening sense of repentance and a person sees more clearly their depth of sinfulness. Of course, according to Wesley this is original sin.

Repentance is "the first positive step on the road to salvation."²⁰ It leads to positive belief in the gospel.²¹ This positive belief is the understanding that the individual is saved from their sins by Christ's suffering. Wesley expresses our need for repentance and the results of this positive belief in the following passage from his sermon, "The Way to the Kingdom."

If to this lively conviction of thy inward and outward sins, of thy utter guiltiness and helplessness, there be added suitable affections, - sorrow of heart, for having despised thy own mercies; remorse, and self-condemnation, having thy mouth stopped; shame to lift up thine eyes to heaven; fear of the wrath of God abiding on thee, of His curse hanging over thy head, and of the fiery indignation ready to devour those who forget God and obey not our Lord Jesus Christ; earnest desire to escape from that indignation, to cease from evil, and to learn to do

¹⁸Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 107-8.

¹⁹Ibid., 107.

²⁰Colin Williams, 59.

²¹William Ragsdale Cannon, The Theology of John Wesley (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1946), 109.

well, - then I say unto thee, in the name of the Lord, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' One step more, and thou shalt enter in. Thou dost 'repent.' Now, 'believe the gospel.'²²

William R. Cannon, in his book, The Theology of John Wesley, describes this positive belief in the following way.

What Wesley is trying to express is that, over against the state of helplessness and corruption in which all men are found, is set this positive act of God for their deliverance and restoration. Or, to be even more exact, over against what man is not able to do for himself, is set what God is both able and willing to do for him.²³

This knowledge of our sinfulness causes us to change. This change seen during repentance is labelled by Wesley as the "fruits of repentance." Because we are aware of our sinfulness and God has convicted us of it, what is produced in us is "real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment."²⁴ "Indeed the whole form of their life was changed: They had 'left off doing evil, and learned to do well.'²⁵

Lindstrom elucidates this point about change by stating, "These fruits can also be described as an outward change of the whole form of life."²⁶

Wesley describes the fruits of repentance as: "obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, leaving off from

²²Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 110.

²³Cannon, The Theology of John Wesley, 110.

²⁴Wesley, Works, 8:47.

²⁵Ibid., 8:203.

²⁶Lindstrom, 114.

evil, doing good, and using his ordinances, according to the power we have received."²⁷ In the process of salvation, repentance before justification is the first time an individual fully realizes their sinfulness and wants to change their situation.

As an ontological basis for understanding psychotherapy, repentance before justification is caused because of the individual's pain over their present way of life. Being convicted of the wrongness of their whole way of being, they turn to God's grace as the way out of their abyss.

In psychotherapy Wolberg, at a similar point in the process, talks about motivating patients for therapy. His focus is on the positive benefits of therapy as well as the patient's inadequacies. Wolberg creates incentives for therapy by helping the patient understand how psychotherapy helps persons²⁸ and by helping the patient focus on manifestations of troubling symptoms.²⁹

According to Wolberg the therapist will know when a patient is responding to these lures to become involved in psychotherapy. The therapist will observe the patient being more active and participatory in the process. The patient will then work more successfully in therapy.

"As long as a lack of motivation persists, the

²⁷Wesley, Works, 8:275-76.

²⁸Wolberg, 1:515-17.

²⁹Ibid., 1:462-63.

prognosis for any kind of therapy will be poor."³⁰
"Accordingly it is impossible to establish the kind of working relationship that permits achievement of meaningful therapeutic goals."³¹ Wolberg goes on to outline how such a poorly motivated patient should be managed.³²

Throughout this outline Wolberg maintains that a neutral attitude of understanding and acceptance, and reflection of the patient's negative feelings toward therapy should be maintained. Only when enough information about the patient has been accumulated does the therapist venture to state, "that the patient requires psychotherapy and may greatly benefit from it."³³ Wolberg is clear, however, that, "The therapist must respect the fact that only the patient can decide whether or not he wants therapy, no matter how much he needs it."³⁴

It is interesting to note that Wolberg attempts to build motivation and incentives for therapy essentially in a twofold way. First, he focuses the patient's attention on their troubling symptoms, such as anxiety, lack of ability to function socially, obsessive thought patterns, needs to be

³⁰Ibid., 1:424.

³¹Ibid., 1:458.

³²Ibid., 1:458.

³³Ibid., 1:458.

³⁴Ibid., 1:462.

like others, and depression.³⁵ Secondly, he focuses on the possible positive outcome of change.

Wesley approaches persons in a similar way. First, he stresses their sinfulness, or inadequacies, and their need for salvation. Then he points out the positive results in responding to God's grace. He even suggest this formula for preaching in the "Minutes of the First Annual Conference."

Q. 13. What is the best general method in preaching?

- A. 1. To invite.
 2. To convince.
 3. To offer Christ, and, lastly,
 4. To build up - and to do this (in some measure) in every sermon.³⁶

Wesley understands that a person's basic sinfulness must be recognized and that the individual must be willing to rely on God's gift of grace through faith in order to overcome this sinful nature.

Wolberg, on the other hand, also confronts his clients about their need for change by using illustrations of how patients improve and by creating incentives by pointing out areas of dysfunction in the patient's life. This is done by the therapist always maintaining a tolerant and open-minded attitude.

Also, Wolberg supports the thesis of the importance of a patient being aware of their shortcomings. In his outline of the progressive stages of self-understanding and steps of

³⁵Ibid., 1:463.

³⁶Wesley, Works, 8:275.

adaptive action, he identifies at least three separate steps which are similar to the stage of repentance. They are:

4. Recognition of repetitive patterns of behavior and appreciation of their responsibility for disturbed feelings.
5. Awareness of dissatisfaction with behavior patterns, but realization of their compulsive persistence.
11. Intense dissatisfaction with current patterns, insecurities, and devalued self-esteem.³⁷

The assertion of this section on repentance before justification is that the convincing grace of God renders a verdict on the individual's sinfulness in a way that helps them see themselves as they really are -- persons in need of help and healing. Thomas C. Oden states this in the following way,

If the precondition for human renewal in therapy is radical self-acceptance and honesty with oneself amid self-deceptions, in corresponding Christian language repentance constitutes the first movement toward authenticity and faith.³⁸

From Wolberg's process of psychotherapy can be explicated the importance of repentance. Wesley's premise that repentance, as an awareness of the individual's predicament, is necessary for further change and growth to take place.

Wolberg understands that the patient must recognize dysfunctional and repetitive patterns and become intensely dissatisfied with the negative feelings they produce. This understanding of the patient contains an implicit theological

³⁷Wolberg, 1:525.

³⁸Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 65.

assumption that Wesley makes explicit in developing his theology of repentance. Wesley's thoughts about repentance include awareness of our sinfulness, and a willingness to change, which is seen in doing works meet for repentance.

Works before Justification

Wesley clearly states that, "all works done before justification have in them the nature of sin."³⁹ He outlines this argument in a most detailed fashion in his sermon, "Justification by Faith." In this sermon he declares,

no works done before justification can be truly and properly good. The argument runs plainly thus:

No works are good which are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done:

But no works done before justification are done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done:

Therefore, no works before justification are good.⁴⁰

Wesley explains this further by arguing,

that God hath willed and commanded that "all our works" should "be done in charity," in love (cf. ICor. 16:14), in that love to God which produces love to all mankind. But none of our works can be done in this love while the love of the Father (of God as our Father) is not in us.⁴¹

This love enters us at the time of justification.

Wolberg and other psychoanalytically-oriented psychotherapists understand this phenomena as a repetition compulsion. "Simplified, repetition compulsion is where a person finds herself or himself repeating the same mistake or

³⁹Wesley, Works, 2:326.

⁴⁰Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 83.

⁴¹Ibid., 83.

painful experience in many, if not all of her or his personal relationships."⁴² This compulsion to repeat is motivated by unconscious conflicts.

Carroll Wise, in his book, Pastoral Counseling: Its Theory and Practice, writes, "Many ministers are inclined to approve and even idealize persons whose compulsions lead them toward religious activities."⁴³ He continues his discussion of compulsive behavior by stating,

The skillful minister will learn to distinguish between the person whose activities are the result of conflict and the person whose activities are the result of wholesome, growing, integrative functioning. One criterion is the amount of conscious control and direction that is involved. Another is how the person reacts to additional pressure and frustration. Reactions of anxiety or hostility are danger signals.⁴⁴

An example of works before justification being a repetition compulsion, and therefore not done in the love that Wesley speaks of, is the individual who is driven to please others as a way of trying to find the acceptance and the love they need to receive. This individual gives money to the poor, prays without ceasing, worries about, and responds to, the pain in those around them, and yet feels no real satisfaction and comfort in doing this. The compulsion of needing to be accepted drives this person to do more and more

⁴²Ronald R. Lee, Clergy and Clients (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 107.

⁴³Carroll A. Wise, Pastoral Counseling: Its Theory and Practice (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), 36.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 36.

for others -- sometimes to the point of mental and physical exhaustion -- without replenishing this individual.

The motivation for this behavior being repeated over and over again comes from the feeling of having to do these things in order to be accepted. This is in opposition to freely responding to the needs of others out of choice rather than feeling compelled to do these things. Therefore, even in a psychological sense, we would evaluate these behaviors as not being truly good works.

As Wesley said,

these are, in one sense, "good works;" they are "good and profitable to men." But it does not follow that they are, strictly speaking, good in themselves or good in the sight of God. All truly "good works" (to use the words of our Church) "follow after justification." And they are therefore good and "acceptable to God in Christ" (1 Peter 2:5) because they "spring out of a true and living faith." "Yea rather, for that they (works before justification) are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not, "how strange soever it may appear to some, "but they have the nature of sin."⁴⁵

Wolberg would see the repetition compulsion as symptoms of the underlying conflicts of the patient and as dynamics that need to be worked through with the help of the therapist. He would understand that there are great resistances in the patient to changing these patterns and dynamics and would label these behaviors as problematical -- certainly not good behavior in the sense of aiding optimal adjustment in the

⁴⁵Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 212-13.

patient.⁴⁶

The repetition compulsion implies a theological condition of trying to be saved by works, not by faith. Wesley makes it abundantly clear that we are saved by grace through faith and that no works are good unless they come out of a faith in God.

Again, Wesley's understanding of works before justification can be seen as normative in understanding the repetition compulsion. Before a person is pardoned and accepted their behavior is driven by compulsions which repeat old, and many times, negative patterns in their lives.

Wesley's Doctrine of Justification

Wesley describes justification as the point in time when the guilt of sin is taken away.⁴⁷ In his Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament he allies justification with pardon and acceptance.⁴⁸ In his sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley claims, "Justification is another word for pardon. It is forgiveness of all our sins; and, what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God."⁴⁹ "By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin and restored

⁴⁶Wolberg, "The General Principles of Psychotherapy," chapter 17, 1:353-59.

⁴⁷Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 212-13.

⁴⁸See commentary on Rom. 4:9 in John Wesley, Explanatory Notes, 372.

⁴⁹Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 724.

to the favor of God."⁵⁰

It is clear in Wesley's writings that the cause of justification is the atonement. Wesley explains this in the following way, "In strictness, therefore, neither our faith nor our works justify us, that is, deserve the remission of our sins. But God himself justifies us of his own mercy, through the merits of his Son only."⁵¹ "Atonement was the legal basis for justification. Atonement was a single event in the past, justification its individual and present application."⁵²

The closest process to justification that Wolberg describes is "The Working-Through Process." He outlines this process in Chapter 47.⁵³ It is important to note that Wolberg sees change as only gradual, and not both "gradual and instantaneous" as Wesley does.⁵⁴ Although Wolberg discusses catharsis and its importance, he does not point to moments in time when a patient is instantaneously changed. Wolberg sees change as occurring very slowly in steps and phases.⁵⁵

Wolberg claims,

This process of "working through" is usually extremely

⁵⁰Wesley, Works, 6:509.

⁵¹Ibid., 8:362.

⁵²Lindstrom, 92.

⁵³Wolberg, chapter 47, 2:652-64.

⁵⁴Wesley, Works, 8:328.

⁵⁵Wolberg, 1:358-59 and 1:524-25.

slow, particularly where basic character patterns are being challenged. One may painstakingly work at a problem with little surface change. Then after a number of months something seems to "give," and the patient begins responding in a different way to his environment. Gaining satisfaction from the new response, he integrates it within his personality. The old patterns continue to appear from time to time, but he becomes increasingly capable of controlling them and replacing them with new reactions. Having achieved a partial goal, he is motivated to tackle more ambitious aims. The investigative operation is extended toward these new objectives, and the working-through exercise then goes on with retreats and advances until constructive and established action eventuates.⁵⁶

By continuing to work at this process Wolberg perceives slow results. He states,

Working through, is especially difficult in reconstructive therapy. The releasing of the self from the restraint of an archaic conscience, freeing it from paralyzing threats of inner fears and conflicts, is an extremely slow process. Ego growth gradually emerges, with the development of self-respect, assertiveness, self-esteem, and self-confidence. It is associated with liberation of the individual from a sense of helplessness, from fears of imminent rejection and hurt from a hostile world.⁵⁷

By using the transference of the patient as a mechanism for the patient to experience his unconscious impulses in operation, Wolberg believes the patient comes to a new level of integration. He describes this part of the "Working-Through" phase in the following way:

A new phase in his relationship with the therapist ensues. Realizing that the therapist means more to him than does anyone else, he seeks to claim his new ally for himself. He may wish to continue the relationship indefinitely, and he may look upon the completion of therapy as a threat. Clinging to his illness may have positive values.

⁵⁶Ibid., 2:653.

⁵⁷Ibid., 2:655.

However, he soon begins to understand that there are reality limitations in his present relationship, and he begins to realize that he does not get out of it the things that he is beginning to demand of life, that the outside world is the only milieu in which he can gratify his needs. He finds the relationship with the therapist gratifying, but not gratifying enough; his reality sense becomes stronger and his ability to cope with frustration is enhanced. Finally, he sets out in the world to gain those satisfactions he has never before felt were available to him.⁵⁸

Self Acceptance and Intimacy

The themes of original sin, prevenient grace and atonement are woven into the fabric of justification. Because of our alienation from God and from ourselves we are caught in the quagmire of sin. Our only escape comes through the prevenient grace God offers us through the atonement. The basis of the grace that is given by God is the atonement. As this prevenient grace works in the individual, he, or she, begins to understand the severity of their predicament and their guiltiness before God. Once they understand their guilt, there is a realization of the need for God's forgiveness in order for them to become whole.

In Wesley's order of salvation, forgiveness and pardon for our sin and guilt come at the point of justification. Justification is pardon and acceptance.

For persons to feel good about themselves they need to feel accepted by others and themselves. The ground of our acceptability as being based on the atonement has already been

⁵⁸Ibid., 2:660.

discussed. When talking about atonement, the discussion focused on atonement as the cause of our acceptance. Or, as Wesley would say, the atonement is the legal basis for our acceptance. It is the theological basis by which the individual is made acceptable.

In discussing justification as acceptance the focus is on the application of the atonement to the individual. It implies that the individual is in God's favor, thus expressing a new relationship with God. It implies being reconciled to God.

This new relationship with God is the beginning of, and ground of, self-acceptance. This self-acceptance is the result of a response to God's grace and is not something the individual can conjure up within themselves. In other words, self-acceptance is not fulfilled apart from the love of God. Through justification God is pointing to how the individual is redeemable and thus, pointing to the possibility of self-acceptance.

The self-acceptance that ensues from justification becomes the basis for self acceptance and self-love and the ability to accept and love others. Psychologically, the ability to love others is based on our own self-acceptance. Theologically, the basis for the ability to love our neighbor is the forgiveness of God which comes at the point of justification.

The ability to love others implies an ability to be

intimate with others. Intimacy with others is based on our ability to love others. This love of others comes from first having been loved by God. Because we have been loved and accepted through God's grace we have the faith needed to risk loving others. The act of risking is a leap of faith. As we risk loving others we are taking a leap of faith that the other person will love us. The strength to take this risk comes from our having been accepted by God.

This ability to risk allows us to extend ourselves unselfishly to others. This selfless love of neighbor is the action that is expected of us once we have been justified.

God's own actions are the basis for our learning what true intimacy is. God has continually risked loving us in spite of being constantly rejected. This steadfast love is a model of intimacy for us.

Intimacy is making ourselves known to others and taking the risk they will still love us. It is the process of being known by the other and knowing the other. We are able to do this because God has intimately known us and has allowed us to know him.

Thus, justification, as the basis of being accepted by God, becomes the basis for our own self-acceptance and self-love. This self-love, as grounded in God, is to be extended to others. In risking love for others we learn the meaning of intimacy. The basis of intimacy is God's risking of himself in his love to us.

What this section has helped to provide has been a connection between what happens at the point of repentance and justification in the theological sense to what happens in the process of psychotherapy during the "Working-Through" phase of treatment. Although there are significant dissimilarities, these processes are similar enough to allow an analogy to be made between Wesley and Wolberg. As Thomas C. Oden states in Kerygma and Counseling,

It is not that God's activity is somehow clarified by psychotherapy, but that psychotherapy seems to express something which faith has already deeply experienced in its relation to the salvation event to which it witnesses as its ground and its source.⁵⁹

The development of self-respect, assertiveness, self-esteem, and self confidence that occur in the Middle Phase of Treatment allow the patient to begin to find new energy for life and to put aside fears of rejection and helplessness. Wesley's theology of justification makes explicit the sense of acceptance and reconciliation the individual experiences from God. In the words of Wolberg we find implicit theological assumptions that Wesley helps to make explicit.

Wesley's Doctrine of the New Birth

New Birth occurs at the same time as justification. Wesley describes this sequence in his sermon, "The New Birth."

In order of time, neither of these is before the other; in the moment we are justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus, we are also, "born of the Spirit"; but in order of thinking, as it is termed, justification precedes new birth. We first conceive His

⁵⁹Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 137.

wrath to be turned away, and then his spirit to work in our hearts.⁶⁰

Wesley describes what he means by the New Birth in a number of his sermons.⁶¹ In these sermons Wesley distinguishes the differences between justification and the new birth. In his sermon, "The New Birth," he claims,

If any doctrines within the whole compass of Christianity may be properly termed 'fundamental,' they are doubtless these two, - the doctrine of justification, and that of the new birth: the former relating to that great work which God does for us, in forgiving our sins; the latter, to the great work which God does in us, in renewing our fallen nature. In order of time, neither of these is before the other; in the moment we are justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus, we are also 'born of the Spirit'; but in order of thinking, as it is termed, justification precedes the new birth. We first conceive His wrath to be turned away, and then His Spirit to work in our hearts.⁶²

Wesley understood the importance of the individual's consciousness of a real change within them at the time of conversion.⁶³ He expounds on this point in his journal discussing what it means to be a new creature in Christ. He says, "First: His judgements are new: his judgement of

⁶⁰Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 567-8.

⁶¹Thomas C. Oden, ed., The New Birth (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984). This book is a "Modern English Edition" of five of Wesley's sermons which covers Wesley's thoughts about the New Birth. Oden includes the following of Wesley's sermons: (1) "The New Birth"; (2) "The First Fruits of the Spirit"; (3) "The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption"; (4) "The Marks of the New Birth"; and (5) "On Working Out Our Own Salvation."

⁶²Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 567-68.

⁶³Colin Williams, 101-02.

himself, of happiness, of holiness."⁶⁴

Colin Williams continues this argument by saying, "Wesley remained convinced that conversion is always accompanied by the awareness of real change."⁶⁵ He reiterates this point by stating, "Nevertheless, Wesley believed that it is scarcely possible for the beginning of this new life to occur without the believer being aware of it."⁶⁶ This point becomes important for this study as the doctrine of the new birth is compared to Wolberg's view of change during the psychotherapeutic process.

Wolberg understands change in individuals as being a result of the individual's understanding their own dynamics through the mechanism of insight and, then, translating that insight into action that helps the person adapt more constructively.⁶⁷

The conscious awareness by the patient of their own dynamics is a sine qua non in Wolberg. He talks about this issue in "The Middle Phase of Treatment," when he holds forth that,

Personality change is catalyzed by helping the patient in psychotherapy to arrive at an awareness of the operative forces within himself. This process is characterized by progressive stages of self understanding and steps of

⁶⁴Wesley, Works, 1:161.

⁶⁵Colin Williams, 101.

⁶⁶Ibid., 102.

⁶⁷Wolberg, chapters 46 and 47.

adaptive action.⁶⁸

Wolberg then lists fifteen steps from the beginning to the end of this process. The entire process is based on the awareness and consciousness of the individual concerning the forces within them.⁶⁹ Wolberg states this tenet in another way also when he claims, "Progress in reconstructive therapy is registered by the increasing capacity of the reasonable ego to discern the irrationality of its actions, feelings, and defenses."⁷⁰

The consciousness of the process of change is a tenet held both in Wesley's order of salvation and in Wolberg's process of psychotherapy. This consciousness, or awareness, is the mechanism that allows the individual to be responsible for their own behavior and attitudes and the changing of these. This discussion was developed more fully in the first chapter of this dissertation under the heading of "Prevenient Grace."

The awareness that is discussed as part of the process of new birth is of a different nature and takes on the meaning of "Assurance," rather than an awareness that parallels insight. The individual who has experienced regeneration is aware that they are a new person. The equivalent of this phase in Wolberg would be the strengthening and development of

⁶⁸Ibid., 1:524-25.

⁶⁹Ibid., 1:525.

⁷⁰Ibid., 2:659.

the ego to the point of self confidence , assertiveness, and expressiveness.⁷¹ Wolberg develops this point in his explanation of the "Middle Phase of Treatment" in both Chapter 36 and Chapter 47. In Chapter 36 he states,

What a therapist hopes to effect in reconstructive therapy is a building of security in the person so that that individual no longer feels menaced by fears of the world. In addition, self esteem must be enhanced to the point of self confidence, assertiveness. and creative self fulfillment. Each individual must gain respect for oneself without striving for perfectionism or superiority. Relationships with people must become more harmonious and shorn of such impulses as dependency, detachment, and aggression. Finally, one must become capable of satisfying inner needs and demands without anxiety and in conformity with the standards of the group.⁷²

Wolberg lists these ideas in his stages of psychotherapy as,

13. Liberation from old values and types of action.
14. Evolution of greater security, assertiveness, self esteem and a sense of mastery.⁷³

This change in the individual is internal and gives the individual a sense of security and self confidence. These will be compared to Wesley's doctrine of assurance in a later section of this work.

Again the rudiments of theological issues are present in Wolberg's work and are explicated by using Wesley's theology of conversion, or new birth.

Another issue in comparing Wesley's understanding of

⁷¹Ibid., 2:655-59.

⁷²Ibid., 1:524.

⁷³Ibid., 1:525.

the New Birth to Wolberg's understanding of the process of change in psychotherapy is the idea of gradual versus instantaneous change as developed by Wesley.

Wesley describes the change that takes place in the New Birth by using the analogy of the natural birthing process. He develops this analogy in the following way,

The 'eyes of his understanding are opened' (such is the language of the great Apostle); and, He who of old 'commanded light to shine out of darkness shining out of his heart, he sees the light of the glory of God,' His glorious love, 'in the face of Jesus Christ.' His ears being opened he is now capable of hearing the inward voice of God saying 'Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee'; 'Go and sin no more.' This is the purport of what God speaks to his heart; although perhaps not in these very words. He is now ready to hear whatsoever 'He that teacheth man knowledge' is pleased, from time to time, to reveal to him. He 'feels in his heart,' to use the language of our Church, 'the mighty working of the Spirit of God'; not in a gross, carnal sense, as the men of the world stupidly and willfully misunderstand the expression; though they have been told again and again, we mean thereby neither more or less than this: he feels, is inwardly sensible of, the graces which the Spirit of God works in his heart. He feels, he is conscious of, a 'peace which passeth all understanding.' He many times feels such joy in God as is 'unspeakable, and full of glory.' He feels 'the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him'; and all his spiritual senses are then exercised to discern spiritual good and evil. By the use of these, he is daily increasing in the knowledge of God, of Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, and of all the things pertaining to His inward kingdom. And now he may be properly said to live: God having quickened him by His Spirit, he is alive to God through Jesus Christ. He lives a life which the world knoweth not of, a 'life which is hid with Christ in God.' God is continually breathing, as it were, upon the soul; and his soul is breathing unto God. Grace is descending into his heart; and prayer and praise ascending to heaven: and by this intercourse between God and man, this fellowship with the Father and the Son, as by a kind of spiritual respiration, the life of God in the soul is sustained; and the child of God grows up, till he comes to

the 'full measure of the stature of Christ.'⁷⁴

The complete, lengthy quote is offered because as William R. Cannon states,

In this passage, more than anywhere else in the whole of Wesleyan literature, we find the clearest expression of the nature of the new birth and catch the brightest reflection of the moral and spiritual aspects of justification shining in human life.⁷⁵

In his comparison of the New Birth to natural birth Wesley is combining the elements of gradual change and instantaneous change.⁷⁶ Lindstrom develops Wesley's ideas about gradual and instantaneous change in his book, Wesley and Sanctification. In this book he outlines the relationship between these two elements by expressing the following,

Because he maintains that both (New Birth and complete sanctification) are conferred upon man in a single instant, only the instantaneous element in salvation has received attention. Thus the fact that Wesley also sees salvation as a gradual development has been overlooked. Actually, the idea of a gradual development is a prominent element in his conception of salvation, and indeed in his thought generally. What happens is that these two elements, the instantaneous and the gradual, are merged, and the order of salvation peculiar to Wesley is the outcome of this mergence.⁷⁷

Later in the same chapter Lindstrom reiterates this same point by claiming,

In the process of salvation this gradual development is combined with an instantaneous element. It is seen in the notion - clearly influenced by Moravianism - of the

⁷⁴Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 571-72.

⁷⁵Cannon, The Theology of John Wesley, 215.

⁷⁶Lindstrom, 105, 119-22.

⁷⁷Ibid., 105.

sudden supervention of justification and new birth, and in the higher though analogous experience of full sanctification. The gradual process is interrupted, that is, by the direct intervention of God, which in a single instant raises man to a higher plane. It is this combination of the gradual and the instantaneous that distinguishes Wesley's conception of the process of salvation. Visually it takes the form of an ascent by steps.⁷⁸

This combination of the gradual and instantaneous in Wesley's order of salvation is a significant resource in understanding change as Wolberg outlines the process and steps involved in it.

Wolberg recognizes "Spontaneous" Cures,⁷⁹ which he believes occur when

a variety of forces ameliorate neurotic symptoms and, even, under fortunate circumstances sponsor personality growth.

These forces work so subtly that they are usually overlooked. They are an inherent and inevitable part of the living experience. Because they exert their effect during psychotherapy, as well as outside of it, it is difficult to know the proportion of benefit the individual has derived from these congenial nonspecific agents and how much that person has gained from the specific psychotherapeutic maneuvers themselves.⁸⁰

Wolberg continues this discussion by stating,

Spontaneous cures occur more frequently than we are wont to admit, for both physical and emotional difficulties are associated with periods of exacerbation and periods of remission and, often, without apparent cause, vanish on their own accord.⁸¹

⁷⁸Ibid., 121.

⁷⁹Wolberg. In chapters 3 and 4 are discussions of the theory of "Spontaneous Cures," and "Extratherapeutic (Nonspecific) Healing Aids." See pages 1:18-33.

⁸⁰Ibid., 1:18.

⁸¹Ibid., 1:18.

Wolberg discusses the difficulty of understanding how spontaneous cures happen. He attempts to explain them by describing three operative factors. "First, life circumstances may change and open up opportunities for gratification of important but vitiated needs, normal and neurotic."⁸² He gives examples of changes in current situations such as marriage to a stronger person providing an individual more strength.

Wolberg develops a second mechanism involved in spontaneous cures. He asserts, "provocative stress sources may disappear as a result of the removal of the initiating environmental irritant, or because the individual extirpates himself from it."⁸³ An example of this might be a promotion at work, moving out of parents' home, or even something as simple as a vacation.

Third, crumbling or shattered defenses, whose failure promotes adaptive collapse, may be restored to their original strength, or be reinforced by new, more adequate, and less disabling defenses. Not only may the old neurotic balances of power be restored, but surprisingly, without design, enduring personality changes may develop.⁸⁴

Wolberg clearly believes spontaneous cures do occur.⁸⁵ Generally, he holds forth that this does "not take place in a vacuum. It results from the operation of forces that exert a

⁸²Ibid., 1:19.

⁸³Ibid., 1:19.

⁸⁴Ibid., 1:19.

⁸⁵Ibid., 1:22.

healing influence on neurotic patterns."⁸⁶

The section on "Spontaneous" Cures is concluded by stressing the basic differences between change during the psychotherapy process and "Spontaneous" cures. He observes the following,

It will be recognized that some of the undercurrent processes in "spontaneous cure" are similar to those in psychotherapy. Whereas, in "spontaneous" cure, the individual inadvertently seeks out the conditions in which it is possible to work out problems; in psychotherapy, circumstances conducive to relief or recovery are actually manipulated.⁸⁷

Wolberg continues this thought by declaring,

In contrast to the fortuitous nature of the "spontaneous" development, psychotherapy is a planned effort to promote symptom alleviation and constructive learning both within and outside of the psychotherapeutic setting.⁸⁸

Though Wolberg sees the possibility of instantaneous change, he depicts psychotherapy as a more calculated and gradual process.

Wesley's development of the gradual and the instantaneous processes give both a "successive element expressed in degrees and measures"⁸⁹ and an instantaneous element. Through the instantaneous element God is able to intervene directly in the process and instantly move the individual from one stage to the next. Wesley knows that the

⁸⁶Ibid., 1:22.

⁸⁷Ibid., 1:22.

⁸⁸Ibid., 1:22.

⁸⁹Lindstrom, 120.

process of salvation can generally be explained in a reasonable way. But Wesley also knows the real change that occurs within us is more than just a series of steps that can be manipulated in a scientific or rational way. Wesley describes this by acknowledging,

The precise manner how it is done, how the Holy Spirit works this in the soul, neither thou nor the wisest of the children of men is able to explain.⁹⁰

The chief difference between Wesley and Wolberg is in the fact that Wesley not only admits to the instantaneous or spontaneous element, but incorporates it into his understanding of change. Wolberg, though he admits there are such elements involved in the process of change, is hesitant to incorporate them into the process of psychotherapy in a definitive and thorough way. It seems to me that he is avoiding a fairly significant view of how change occurs.

The way that Wesley's elements of both instantaneous and gradual change inform and expand Wolberg's more mechanical and carefully plotted form of change is first of all, and most obviously, by incorporating the instantaneous. The most important benefit of the instantaneous element is that it offers a hope of change in the individual's life that a more gradual change does not. If there is hope that deliverance is at hand and can be obtained in an instant the individual will be more motivated and more willing to participate in the process. It is this expectation, this hope, that is a

⁹⁰Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 202.

curative factor in any process of change.

A significant difference in the two processes arises here. Wolberg's process of psychotherapy is a more contained and smaller process than that of an order of salvation.

In this section Wesley has a viewpoint that adds to Wolberg's understanding of change. However, in terms of the methodology of this paper, it cannot be said that Wesley explicates any theological assumptions from Wolberg since Wolberg does not incorporate the idea of instantaneous change into the process of psychotherapy.

The Marks of the New Birth

The Marks of the New Birth, or The First Fruits of the Spirit, connote definite outward signs of change. According to Wesley, "An immediate and constant fruit of this faith is power over sin, - power over outward sin of every kind and over inward sin."⁹¹ This means that the converted individual has power over outward sin and refuses to do wrong or commit evil.⁹² The new birth also gives the individual convert an ability to express a "holiness in conversation," and is just in their dealings with their neighbor.⁹³ Finally, the third result of the new birth is that the individual is given a new motive for life -- the motive of love.⁹⁴

⁹¹Ibid., 202.

⁹²Ibid., 202.

⁹³Ibid., 115.

⁹⁴Cannon, The Theology of John Wesley, 133.

This love includes love of God and love of neighbor.⁹⁵ But Cannon is also careful to note that, "It becomes not alone the bond of affection that ties man to God but also a disposition of character that marks man's life. In a very real sense the quality as well as the object of man's love has been altered."⁹⁶

In his chapters entitled "Translating Insight into Action" and "The Working Through Process," Wolberg describes some of the attitude and behavioral changes that occur in the Middle Phase of treatment.⁹⁷ He discusses the importance of behavior changes as a result of a patient's better understanding themselves. He does not believe, as Freud did, that behavior is altered just because a client becomes aware of their unconscious behavior.⁹⁸

Wolberg expresses this assertion by emphasizing,

The fact that a patient acquires a basic understanding of his problems, and delves into their origin as far back as childhood, does not in the least guarantee he either will or can do anything about them.⁹⁹

He acknowledges that for a cure to take place more than insight is needed. What is this more that is needed? According to Wolberg it is action that helps the patient alter

⁹⁵Ibid., 133.

⁹⁶Ibid., 133.

⁹⁷Wolberg, 2:636-64.

⁹⁸Ibid., 2:636.

⁹⁹Ibid., 2:636.

his behavior.

Wolberg laments the fact that, "It is unfortunate that only too often does therapy grind to a halt at a point where insight must be converted into action."¹⁰⁰

Wolberg claims this "action inhibition may symbolically be repeated in transference, and analysis of the resistance may liberate the patient."¹⁰¹ Other ways behavioral change is supported and encouraged in psychotherapy are by "building motivation for activity,"¹⁰² "providing a favorable environment for action,"¹⁰³ "psychodramatic techniques,"¹⁰⁴ "consultations with family members,"¹⁰⁵ and "adjusting the patient's environment."¹⁰⁶

The result of these interventions by the therapist would hopefully be a positive effectuation of change in the patient. This is expressed by Wolberg in the following way: "The patient has an opportunity to work out, in a more favorable setting, problems that could not be resolved in relationships with early authorities."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 2:638.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 2:638.

¹⁰²Ibid., 2:642.

¹⁰³Ibid., 2:643.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 2:644.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 2:644.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 2:646.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 2:647.

He continues to develop this need for observable change by stating that the therapeutic relationship "fosters the patient's faith in other people and ultimately in himself."¹⁰⁸ "Utilizing the (therapeutic) relationship as a fulcrum, the patient may be urged to experiment with new patterns while observing his responses."¹⁰⁹

Once the patient begins to take positive steps the "success and pleasure in constructive action constitute the greatest possible rewards for the patient."¹¹⁰ Or as Wolberg reiterates,

Eventually the rewards of positive achievement and enjoyment issue out of the new and healthy patterns themselves. Surcease from suffering, reinforced by the joys of productive interpersonal relationships, enable the patient to consolidate gains.¹¹¹

A summary of this need for behavioral change is presented in the following example.

The patient should be apprised of her active need for cooperation. She must be told that one cannot change without experimenting with certain new actions. Like any experiments she must take some risks, and she must be prepared to face some failure and disappointments. Successes cannot occur without some failures.¹¹²

For Wolberg the integration of insight into action is a slow, painstaking process of experimentation in new

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 2:648.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 2:648.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 2:648.

¹¹¹Ibid., 2:649.

¹¹²Ibid., 2:661.

behaviors that leads from dysfunction to healthier patterns of adjustment.

For Wesley, the fact that the individual has been justified does not mean a secession of the need for growth. Wesley realized that though sin no longer reigned in the regenerate person, it still remained. Wesley discusses this in his sermon, "The Great Privilege of Those That Are Born of God." The result of this concept is that the individual, though re-born, still has to deal with the force of his or her old self and the effects of their human tendency to sin.

Wesley describes how this paradox of opposites still exist within the individual in his sermon on "Sin in Believers." Wesley says,

Original sin is the corruption of the nature of every man, whereby man is in his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth contrary to the spirit. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated whereby the lust of the flesh is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe, yet this lust hath of itself the nature of sin.¹¹³

Wesley contends that though the individual has completely changed they cannot forget their old self. Sin exists as a tendency or possibility but has no power over one who has been regenerated. He states, "That believers are delivered from the guilt and power of sin, we allow; that they are delivered from the being of it, we deny."¹¹⁴

¹¹³Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 661.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 668.

Wolberg would see old patterns and attitudes as having been identified and brought to consciousness of the patient. The patient would then change these through their relationship with the therapist by understanding the dynamics of their behavior through insight and then by working through their beliefs through continual accrual of more insight and through confrontation to change old beliefs and behavioral patterns. These old patterns can be contained and even changed, although Wolberg clearly understands the patient's tendency to regress to former patterns of thought and behavior.

Wolberg maintains,

No matter how thoroughly the patient's neurotic patterns seem to have been eradicated, particularly in reconstructive therapy, shadows of old reactions persist. One may be incapable of eliminating them completely, as one cannot obliterate entirely other aspects of the patient's past. Under conditions of great insecurity, when the patient's sense of mastery is threatened, or during periods of disappointment, frustration, deprivation, old defenses and strivings characteristic of past neurotic modes of adaptation are likely to be awakened.¹¹⁵

The methodology of this paper of outlining Wolberg's thoughts and then extracting the theological assumptions behind them has again proven useful in dealing with "The Marks of the New Birth." Wesley's understanding that sin remains but no longer reigns even after a conversion experience provides the theological tenet with which to explicate an understanding of how an individual changes in psychotherapy.

¹¹⁵Wolberg, 2:753.

There are internal and behavioral changes in patients during this phase, but old defenses and old neurotic patterns are still present, even if only in the background.

Again, Wesley's understanding of the person's need for continual watchfulness over their spiritual journey and the dual emphasis on growth and the ever-present tendency of sin, can be seen as a basis for understanding how patients in psychotherapy are likely to react to present situations using old defenses.

Wesley's Doctrine of Assurance

Wesley's understanding of the immediacy of assurance as a day to day experience and the corollary supposition that there are degrees of assurance just as there are degrees of faith, mirrors Wesley's entire philosophy of the process of salvation. Assurance is acquired in stages just as faith is. Assurance can be lost just as faith can be lost. Assurance can be regained just as faith can be regained.

Richard P. Heitzenrater, in his book, Mirror and Memory: Reflections on Early Methodism, develops this point by saying,

Assurance, then for Wesley was also a matter of degrees and not to be confused with final perseverance; assurance was a daily confidence (more or less) that one is a child of God. The real possibility of backsliding never left Wesley's frame of thinking.¹¹⁶

Though many authors who write about Wesley have dealt

¹¹⁶Richard P. Heitzenrater, Mirror and Memory: Reflections on Early Methodism (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1989), 129.

with his doctrine of assurance, it seems to me that Heitzenrater, in his chapter, "Great Expectations," has more clearly outlined the development of this doctrine in Wesley.¹¹⁷ He seems to have a clearer picture of how Wesley's thinking changed from the time of his Aldersgate experience to his more mature thinking on the matter. The final outcome of these changes in Wesley's theology is summed up by Heitzenrater at the end of his chapter on assurance. In this summary he states,

The irony of Aldersgate, however, is that its theological significance rests in Wesley's eventual modification of nearly every aspect of his perception and explanation of the event at the time.¹¹⁸

Heitzenrater outlines Wesley's challenges to what he had come to believe about assurance from the Moravians at the time of his Aldersgate experience by claiming,

His main challenges were based on the following propositions of his own: (1) there are degrees of faith; (2) there are degrees of assurance; (3) the means of grace should be encouraged prior to assurance; (4) justification does not necessarily result in assurance; (5) assurance of justification does not necessarily bring complete freedom from doubt or fear; (6) assurance of justification does not necessarily bring full love, peace, and joy; (7) assurance is not final salvation.¹¹⁹

An important part of Wesley's thought that developed out of the Aldersgate experience, and became a part of his understanding of assurance, is the possibility of assurance of

¹¹⁷Ibid., 106-49.

¹¹⁸Ibid., 149.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 147.

justification through the witness of the Holy Spirit. This witness has two aspects: an indirect witness and a direct witness.¹²⁰ Lycurgus M. Starkey defines these two natures of the witness of the spirit in the following way quote. "The witness of the spirit is twofold in nature. There is an inner impression of assurance called a direct witness; the testimony of a changed life constitutes the indirect witness to the Spirit's work."¹²¹

The direct witness of the Holy Spirit is the inward feeling of certainty effected by the Holy Spirit.¹²² Wesley describes this in the following way: "by the testimony of the Spirit, I mean, an inward impression on the soul, whereby the spirit of God, immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God."¹²³ The good works produced by this witness is otherwise labelled by Wesley as the indirect witness of the spirit. Wesley contends these fruits of the spirit are inseparable from the direct witness of the spirit. Wesley proclaimed,

Let none presume to rest in any supposed testimony of the Spirit, which is separate from the fruit of it. If the Spirit of God does really testify we are the children

¹²⁰Lycurgus M. Starkey, Jr., The Work of the Holy Spirit: A Study in Wesleyan Theology (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), chapter 4, 63-77. See also Robert Davis, "The Doctrine of Assurance of John Wesley" (Th.M. thesis, School of Theology at Claremont, 1963), 44-55.

¹²¹Starkey, 64.

¹²²Davis, 51.

¹²³Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 650.

of God, the immediate consequence will be the fruit of the Spirit.¹²⁴

From the inward change in us worked by the Holy Spirit springs forth external evidences in our behaviors, actions and attitudes.

To compare Wesley's doctrine of assurance, including the direct and indirect witness of the spirit, to Wolberg is possibly the most difficult area of this study. This section compares in focus quite specifically to the previous section on increased self-esteem and self confidence.

Wolberg describes some of the changes that occur in the middle phase of treatment in the following way:

there is a reorganization of interpersonal relationships and a more realistic reintegration between the self and its past experiences. Signs of abandonment of compulsive patterns are registered in a sense of inner peace, happiness, security, and absence of neurotic suffering.

With expanding emancipation from his past the patient becomes more self-confident, assertive and expressive. He accepts as his right the making of salutary choices and decisions and the establishment of new values. As the ego of the patient expands, the superego loses its force and tyranny. The patient appreciates joy in living and the experiencing of fruitful productivity.¹²⁵

He reiterates this position in his discussion of the "Mechanics of Therapeutic Change" in step number fourteen. He states,

14. Growing strength within himself contributes to a sense of mastery and produces healthy changes in his feelings of security, his self esteem, and his

¹²⁴Ibid., 658-59.

¹²⁵Wolberg, 1:358.

attitudes toward others.¹²⁶

Essentially what both Wesley and Wolberg are describing are outward signs of internal changes in the individual. Wesley uses the way the Holy Spirit works in us as a way to describe how these changes take place. Wolberg focuses on the issues of transference, insight, and the working-through process.

Through the security gained in the psychotherapeutic relationship, especially as a result of resolving transference issues with the therapist, the patient becomes more confident of themself.

The comparison of assurance to a sense of security and trust is relevant at this point. The sense of security a client has during this phase of treatment is based on the client's ability to trust the therapist as a different type of authority than the client has previously experienced.

Wolberg states,

Change in intrapsychic structure is believed to issue most generally out of the working through of transference, which, recognized or not, openly or covertly shadows every therapeutic relationship.¹²⁷

If transference issues are properly managed a sense of "basic trust"¹²⁸ will be restored in the client. This "basic trust" that occurs at this stage of therapy and at the stage

¹²⁶Ibid., 1:359.

¹²⁷Ibid., 1:260.

¹²⁸Ibid., 1:28.

of assurance in Wesley, is the ingredient that allows the relationship between the therapist and the patient to grow.

The focus here again comes back to the patient-therapist relationship and the salugenetic effects of a warm, working relationship that Wolberg describes in his initial phase of treatment.

In discussing this issue of the patient-therapist relationship and transference issues, Wolberg affirms,

the therapist relationship will then become a corrective experience for the patient. This does not mean that cure is automatically guaranteed. Nevertheless, in a considerable number of patients the development and unravelment of transference can be the most recompensing toward fostering extensive personality alterations.¹²⁹

Within this transference relationship the personality of the patient begins to change, grow, and mature. Or as Wolberg maintains, "Ego growth is nurtured chiefly through a gratifying relationship with the therapist."¹³⁰

Wolberg develops the concept of the patient's continued growth in tandem with the discovery by the patient that the therapist can be trusted and the patient is secure in the therapeutic relationship.¹³¹

Wolberg expresses this idea by asserting,

The transference not only mobilizes the deepest trends and impulses, but also it teaches the patient that he can express these without incurring hurt. This is unlike the ordinary authority-subject relationship, in

¹²⁹Ibid., 1:348.

¹³⁰Ibid., 2:656.

¹³¹Ibid., 2:656-64.

which the person feels obligated to hold back irrational feelings. Because of the therapist's tolerance, the patient becomes capable of countenancing certain attitudes for the first time.¹³²

He continues to describe the ongoing development between the patient and therapist by saying,

The therapist becomes an individual who fits into a special category. He or she is less the authority and more the friend.

The tolerant and understanding attitude of the therapist provides a peculiar attribute of protectiveness; for the patient alone is unable to accept inner conflicts and impulses and uses the therapist as a refuge from danger. The conviction he has a protector enables him to divulge his most repulsive impulses, emotions, memories, and fantasies, with an associated release of affect.¹³³

This theme evolves in the following way,

Encouraged to express himself, he begins to regard the therapist as one who bears only good will toward his repressed drives but he can clarify them to himself under a unique set of conditions - conditions in which he feels accepted and in which there is no condemnation or retaliatory resentment.

The reorientation in his feeling toward the therapist makes it possible for him to regard the therapist as one toward whom he need nurture no ambivalent attitude. His acceptance of the therapist as a real friend has an important effect on his resistances. These are genetically related to the hurt that he experienced in his relationship with early authorities. The removal of resistances is dynamically associated with an alteration in his internalized system of restraints, for, if he is to yield his defenses, he must be assured that the old punishments and retributions will not overtake him. It is here that his experience with the therapist plays so vital a role because in it he has gained an entirely new attitude toward authority. His own conscience is modified by adoption of a more lenient set of credos.¹³⁴

By working through transference issues with the

¹³²Ibid., 2:658.

¹³³Ibid., 2:658.

¹³⁴Ibid., 2:658.

therapist, the client gains more ego strength which is nurtured and encouraged in the relatively secure environs of the therapeutic relationship.

The analogy between Wesley's doctrine of assurance and Wolberg's development of the patient-therapist relationship as seen in the issue of transference, has been discussed by Thomas C. Oden in his work, Kerygma and Counseling.¹³⁵ In his section on "Divine Love, Unconditional Positive Regard, and Love of Others," Oden makes the following comparison.

The heart of the analogy is that even as God unconditionally loves the sinner in order to free him from the self-righteousness, anxiety, guilt, and defensiveness that prevent him from loving his neighbor, so in effective therapy does the client experience in some sense what appears to be a relationship of unconditional positive regard, which frees him to value others anew in the light of his new self-valuation.

An axiom shared by both psychotherapy and theology is that the precondition of loving others is understanding that one is loved.¹³⁶

Oden puts forth the following argument in the formation of his analogy of faith,

as we learn from divine love the character of authentic unconditional positive regard, which frees its recipient to love as he has been loved, so may we perceive in the therapeutic relationship a reflection and mediation of this divine love which is present in being itself (Col. 1:17) as the liberating ground of all human love. The client recognizes in his relationship with the therapist what seems to be an unconditional positive regard for him precisely amid his inconsistencies and compulsions, so as to liberate him to reflect that regard in his relationships with others.¹³⁷

¹³⁵Oden, Kerygma and Counseling. 73-82.

¹³⁶Ibid., 74.

¹³⁷Ibid., 74.

Oden affirms this unconditional positive regard of the therapist to the client as the fulcrum or vehicle for change. The security the client feels from being unconditionally accepted helps him or her to "work out their own salvation" -- a process Oden describes as self actualization.¹³⁸

In this section, Thomas Oden has been used to clarify the analogy between Wolberg and Wesley's doctrine of assurance. The thoughts about the increased security in the therapeutic milieu and the growing self-esteem in the patient have within them implicit theological assumptions that Wesley's doctrine of assurance helps to clarify and develop. This is seen particularly in the fact that behind the patient's feelings of self-esteem and a sense of being secure is the theological understanding that God loves us unconditionally.

Wesley's doctrine of assurance provides us with an understanding of the growing self esteem and self understanding that is developed by clients during the Middle Phase of treatment as outlined by Wolberg.

Chapter Summary

The breadth and depth of the changes that occur in the individual during these steps in Wesley's order of salvation and Wolberg's Middle Phase of Treatment are profound. Essentially the individual goes from an initial stage of having little, if any, understanding of their situation to the

¹³⁸Ibid., 83-113.

heart of the process of change.

In line with the thesis of this paper, repentance before justification, as described by Wesley, becomes a basis for understanding the importance for the individual to: (1) understand the depth of their problems, (2) understand the pain and dysfunction of their present way of acting and thinking, and (3) realize that they have the freedom to choose whether or not to face these problems.

Within Wesley's understanding of works before justification lies a theological formulation for understanding compulsive actions of individuals as they are evaluated in psychotherapy. What Wesley explicitly states about works before justification is implied in the process of dealing with repetition compulsions in a client. The essence of this parallel between the order of salvation and the process of psychotherapy is that until an individual has knowledge of, and control over, their need to repeat harmful patterns and behaviors, their actions are dysfunctional. Therefore, Wesley's expression of works before justification can become a theological foundation from which to understand the dysfunction of the client's repetition compulsions.

Justification is defined by Wesley as pardon, forgiveness, and acceptance. As was pointed out, it is only when we feel pardoned, or forgiven, that we can feel accepted. In order to have a sense of self esteem and self worth everyone first needs to feel accepted and acceptable. In this

sense the foundation for self esteem comes through the act of being justified in the theological sense. Many authors such as Hiltner, Williams, Wise, Oden and Oates have demonstrated the ontology of forgiveness and acceptance in the psychological sense as being grounded in the religious understanding of the forgiveness, pardon, and acceptance that comes from God. Thomas C. Oden, in his book, Kerygma and Counseling, states,

There is a tacit ontological assumption of all effective therapy not that it is merely the counselor who accepts the client but that the client is acceptable as a human being by the ground of being itself.¹³⁹

The reality and character of acceptance as a psychotherapeutic dynamic is made explicit in Wesley's order of salvation during the stage of justification.

The stage of New Birth in Wesley gives us rich images of the process of change in individuals in both a gradual and instantaneous way. Wolberg's processes of inculcating insight and the working through phase are described as gradual processes. Wesley's understanding that change occurs in both a gradual and instantaneous way seems to be a more accurate description of life. He compares changes in persons in a spiritual sense that combines the instantaneous and the gradual approaches.¹⁴⁰ Wesley illustrates this approach in his sermon, The New Birth, by comparing spiritual change to

¹³⁹Ibid., 21.

¹⁴⁰Lindstrom, 120-21.

the birthing process. He states,

A child is born of a woman in a moment, or at least in a very short time: afterward he gradually and slowly grows, till he attains the stature of a man. In like manner, a child is born of God in a short time, if not in a moment. But it is by slow degrees that he afterward grows up to the measure of the full stature of Christ.¹⁴¹

This combination of the instantaneous and the gradual gives us a sense of hope about the prospects of being delivered from our suffering that Wolberg does not really incorporate into his process of psychotherapy.

Marks of the New Birth provide a foundation for comparing changes that occur in the Middle Phase of treatment to changes during the individual's progress through the order of salvation. Both external behavioral changes and internal thoughts and feelings change at this juncture of the process. Due to increased feelings of being accepted, faith in others and faith in self is increased dramatically during this stage. An ability to develop more mature relationships by being more assertive and responsible are "fruits" of the changes at this level.

A growing sense of being able to trust oneself and others is also an outgrowth of this stage. This trust is based on the deepening of one's relationship with God as seen in Wesley's doctrine of assurance. This deepening of trust in God corresponds with the deepening of the relationship between the patient and the therapist as seen in Wolberg. This sense

¹⁴¹ Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 576.

of security and assurance that Wesley offers becomes a parallel to the trust and confidence that is built in psychotherapy. As in psychotherapy, this assurance can be lost either temporarily or permanently if the individual is not watchful over their condition.

This chapter continues to build on the premise that rudiments of an order of salvation are present in the process of psychotherapy as developed by Wolberg. These rudiments are implicit theological assumptions. In this chapter the ideas of Wolberg that have been explicated as containing these theological assumptions have been: the repetition compulsion; the need for security in the therapeutic relationship; the increased self-esteem and self worth that the patient is developing; and the need for behavioral change to occur for the therapy to be effective.

In summary, Wesley's order of salvation explicitly brings to light some of the major themes and issues in the process of psychotherapy in its middle phase of development. A continuing respect for the wisdom and depth of understanding both processes demonstrate is clearly demanded. Though neither process has the answers for the other, both inform each other in a complementary way. Wesley's order of salvation continues to provide a philosophical and theological base from which Wolberg's process of psychotherapy can be understood and critiqued.

CHAPTER 3

The Termination Phase of Treatment

The methodology of analogy that is being used in this paper assumes that the rudiments of an order of salvation as developed by Wesley can be found in Wolberg's process of psychotherapy.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe how John Wesley's stages of "Repentance in Believers" and "Christian Perfection" can be used to explicate the issues that surround the "End Phase" of the process of psychotherapy as outlined by Lewis R. Wolberg.

First, I will outline Wolberg's ideas about the Termination Phase. Then, Wesley's views of "Repentance in Believers" and "Christian Perfection" will be discussed. Finally, Wesley's understandings will be used to explicate the issues dealt with during the termination phase as they are described by Wolberg. Wesley's theology will be used as the norm to which Wolberg will be compared.

Wolberg's Terminal Phase of Treatment

In Chapters 51 and 52 Wolberg describes both "Goals in Terminating Treatment" and "Technical Problems in Termination."¹ Wolberg lists the objective of the End Phase

¹Wolberg, 2:743-58.

of treatment as "terminating therapy."² In order to terminate therapy the following therapeutic tasks would hopefully be accomplished:

1. Analyzing the dependency elements of the therapist-patient relationship.
2. Redefining the treatment situation with the aim of encouraging patient to make his own decisions and to establish his own values and goals.
3. Helping the patient to achieve as much independence assertiveness as possible.³

The resistances in the patient that would frustrate the accomplishment of these tasks would be: "1. Refusal to yield dependency. 2. Fear of assertiveness."⁴

Wolberg states, "Theoretically, psychotherapy is never ending, since emotional growth can go on as long as one lives."⁵ Other therapists hold this same opinion about the ongoing nature of psychotherapy, even after termination. Richard D. Chessick, in his book, The Technique and Practice of Intensive Psychotherapy, reiterates Wolberg's point.

It is also my conviction that psychotherapy is really a never-ending process. The question of termination is not, "When is your psychotherapy over?" but "When is it no longer necessary for us to have formal meetings in order that your psychotherapy process may go on in a continuous fashion."⁶

²Ibid., 1:387.

³Ibid., 1:387.

⁴Ibid., 1:387.

⁵Ibid., 2:743.

⁶Richard D. Chessick, The Technique and Practice of Intensive Psychotherapy (New York: Jason Aronson, 1974), 325.

Wolberg goes on to describe the importance of goals in therapy and the yardstick by which to measure these goals. In his section "Toward a Practical Goal in Therapy," he discusses the frustrations of therapists whose ideal goal may be one of personality reconstruction in the patient. He begins his discussion by stating,

Modern philosophers contend that achievement of enduring happiness, while worthy of pursuit, is undoubtedly a dream. Total adaptation must be measured against humanity's continuing involvement with violence, exploitation, and devastation of the earth's resources.⁷

Wolberg sees the patient's freedom to choose as a variable in the therapeutic process which can thwart the therapist's goal of reconstruction of the personality. Wolberg even states this tenet in much the same way Wesley describes our freedom in relationship to God. It is a freedom to choose not to respond. Wolberg describes this dynamic in the following way.

However, goals in therapy are more or less patient regulated. No matter how well trained and skilled the therapist may be, nor how extensively he or she may desire to reconstruct the patient's personality, the latter is always in a position to veto the therapist's intentions. The patient is particularly strategically placed to thwart the ideal goal of personality maturation - the most difficult of all objectives.⁸

Thus, Wolberg declares that the ideal goals of psychotherapy are usually not reached. He expands on this point by declaring,

⁷Wolberg, 2:746.

⁸Ibid., 2:746.

While the ideal goal of absolute resolution of blocks in personality maturation, with achievement of complete functioning in all areas of living, is a cherished aim in every patient, in practice very few people can reach this objective.⁹

"An absolute cure is thus not possible."¹⁰ In this statement, as in others, Wolberg notes Freud's pessimism about the possibility of altering the character structure of patients,¹¹ and contends a realistic approach to goals in psychotherapy is essential. A realistic approach would acknowledge,

that we may have to content ourselves with the modest objective of freedom from disturbing symptoms, the capacity to function reasonably well, and to experience a modicum of happiness in living.¹²

Wolberg believes this is true because of the conditionings, patterns and systems the patient developed or acquired in their early life.¹³ Because of this Wolberg believes,

In all persons some residues of the disturbed past will remain irrespective of how bountiful one's environment may be, how exhaustively one knows oneself, or how thoroughly one has relearned new patterns.¹⁴

He summarizes his definition of a practical goal in therapy as,

⁹Ibid., 2:747.

¹⁰Ibid., 2:747.

¹¹Ibid., 2:747.

¹²Ibid., 2:748.

¹³Ibid., 2:748-49.

¹⁴Ibid., 2:749.

the achievement by the patient of optimal functioning within the limitations of his financial circumstances, his existing motivations, his ego resources, and the reality situation.¹⁵

Wolberg clearly sees significant limitations of the ability of psychotherapy to heal individuals. These limitations include: the individual's motivation, the individual's inner strength, the individual's past conditionings and early childhood trauma, and the individual's financial resources.

Repentance in Believers

After repentance, justification, new birth, and assurance, Wesley insists that "sin remains, though no longer reigns"¹⁶ in the heart of the believer. Because sin still remains repentance is still necessary. Wesley compares repentance before justification to repentance in believers in his sermons, "The Repentance of Believers" and "On Sin in Believers." In "The Repentance of Believers," he states,

there is also a repentance and a faith which are requisite after we have 'believed the gospel'; yea, and in every subsequent stage of our Christian course, or we cannot 'run the race that is before us.' And this repentance and faith are full as necessary, in order to our continuance and growth in grace, as the former faith and repentance were, in order to our entering into the kingdom of God.¹⁷

Lindstrom complains that the links between stages in

¹⁵Ibid., 2:749.

¹⁶Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 662.

¹⁷Ibid., 674.

Wesley are poorly understood. He states, "A general defect in many expositions of Wesley's view of sanctification and of his theology in general, is the complete or partial neglect of the internal links."¹⁸

These internal links are important to understand if we are to understand the progression and process of change in the individual throughout the process of salvation. One way Lindstrom illustrates these links is in his section on the stages of sanctification. He discusses the importance of one's knowledge of sin remaining after justification and without this knowledge of our sinfulness, there can be no repentance, without which we cannot be fully sanctified. Lindstrom is pointing out that original sin is not just an issue to be considered in the beginning of the order of salvation, but is a problem to be contended with at every stage in the process of salvation.

Issues such as atonement and repentance are critical elements in each stage of the process of salvation. They are not limited to one stage, or step, but are linked to every stage. The acceptance one feels after justification is still based on the atonement, just as acceptance in repentance in believers is based on the atonement.

The interconnectedness of each stage in the process of salvation is emphasized by Lindstrom and cannot be lost sight of in this study. Both the process of salvation and the

¹⁸Lindstrom, 15.

process of psychotherapy are based on the previous stages from which the person has come. Each previous stage is part of the present stage in an integral way.

Wolberg is also clear that his schema of each stage in the process of psychotherapy is not rigid and exclusive of other stages. He explains this in the following way:

The phases of treatment described in the present outline have been schematized for the purposes of convenience. In actual practice, considerable overlapping occurs among the various phases.¹⁹

What is being described here is the view of the healing processes, both spiritual and psychological, as being dynamic, as opposed to static, processes. This is documented easily in Wesley. From his theological point of view, he saw an order and a progression in Christian religious experience.²⁰ This progression is seen in his order of salvation. As Lindstrom states, "Salvation is seen as a process by which man passes through a series of successive stages, each stage representing a different and higher level."²¹ Or, as Wesley himself states, "You cannot stand still; you must either rise or fall; rise higher or fall lower."²² He makes another similar statement in his sermon, "Christian Perfection:"

¹⁹Wolberg, 1:386.

²⁰Jack Verheyden, class notes from "The Life and Thought of John Wesley," School of Theology at Claremont, 29 June 1982.

²¹Lindstrom, 105.

²²Wesley, Works, 7:202.

There is no perfection of degrees, as it is termed; none which does not admit of a continual increase. So that how much soever any man has attained, or in how high a degree soever he is perfect, he hath still need to "grow in grace," and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Savior.²³

Further growth is always possible, and, is always necessary. "The Christian life must either wax or wane. It is impossible for the Christian, even the fully sanctified, to stand still."²⁴

In psychotherapy the working-through process continually unveils another level of dynamics to be faced and worked through. Daniel Day Williams states this proposition in the following way, "The very process of working the problem through may create new connections."²⁵ The growth process is therefore never-ending.

To return more directly to the issue of repentance in believers and its importance for this study, a comparison to relapses in therapy during the terminal phase will be compared to repentance in believers.

Wolberg lays out his ideas about relapses in a way that sounds familiar to Wesley's ideas about sin in believers. Wolberg advances the following point of view on relapses.

No matter how thoroughly the patient's neurotic patterns seem to have been eradicated, particularly in reconstructive therapy, shadows of old reactions persist. One may be incapable of eliminating them completely, as

²³Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 512-13.

²⁴Lindstrom, 118.

²⁵Daniel Day Williams, 28.

one cannot obliterate entirely other aspects of the patient's past. Under conditions of great insecurity, when the patient's sense of mastery is threatened, or during periods of disappointment, frustration, and deprivation, old defenses and strivings characteristic of past neurotic modes of adaptation are apt to be awakened.²⁶

Wesley, in his sermon, "The Great Privilege of those that are Born of God," outlines eight steps in the progress from grace back to sin.²⁷ At no time in the process of salvation is the individual far from relapsing back into their sinful ways. Wesley proposes the following steps:

(1) The divine seed of loving, conquering faith, remains in him that is born of God. "He keepeth himself," by the grace of God, and "cannot commit sin." (2) A temptation arises; whether from the world, the flesh, or the devil, it matters not. (3) The Spirit of God gives warning that sin is near, and bids him more abundantly watch unto prayer. (4) He gives way, in some degree, to the temptation, which now begins to grow pleasing to him. (5) The Holy Spirit is grieved; his faith is weakened; and his love of God grows cold. (6) The Spirit reproves him more sharply, and saith, "This is the way; walk thou in it." (7) He turns away from the painful voice of God, and listens to the pleasing voice of the tempter. (8) Evil desire begins and spreads in his soul, till faith and love vanish away: he is then capable of committing outward sin, the power of the Lord being departed from him.²⁸

Also, Wesley's sermon on the "Wilderness State" contends that most persons along the path to salvation wander off the path and lose their way.²⁹ After having experienced justification, new birth and assurance it might be assumed, as

²⁶Wolberg, 2:753.

²⁷Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 219.

²⁸Ibid., 219-20.

²⁹Ibid., 580-95.

others did in Wesley's day, that the believer would not, and even could not, fall back into sin. Wesley describes his view of the Wilderness State as

1. After God had wrought a great deliverance for Israel, by bringing them out of the house of bondage, they did not immediately enter into the land which He had promised to their fathers; but 'wandered out of the way in the wilderness,' and were variously tempted and distressed. In like manner, after God has delivered them that fear Him from the bondage of sin and Satan, after they are 'justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus,' yet not many of them immediately enter into 'the rest which remaineth for the people of God.' The greater part of them wander, more or less, out of the good way into which He hath brought them. They come, as it were, into a 'waste and howling desert,' where they are variously tempted and tormented: and this, some, in allusion to the case of the Israelites, have termed 'a wilderness state.'³⁰

Wesley's experience and observations of his bands and of other Christians told him that the believer must always be engaged in a watchful struggle.

Wolberg echoes this sentiment by voicing the opinion that even after termination the patient will probably suffer relapses. He affirms this point by stating,

It is essential for the patient to realize that getting well is no guarantee that one will experience no further return of symptoms. Indeed, at the point where therapy is being discontinued, the patient may be informed that he will probably undergo several relapses.³¹

Lindstrom discusses repentance after justification as being based on the believers continued consciousness and

³⁰Ibid., 581.

³¹Wolberg, 2:754.

knowledge of sin.³² He contends,

Like the earlier repentance, this one does not involve a change from sin to holiness, but it does involve man's knowledge of himself and his sinfulness. By this is meant awareness of remaining sin and of one's utter inability to do good on the basis of one's own resources or to deliver oneself by one's own strength from sin and guilt.³³

Wesley was keenly aware of the continual possibility of falling from faith and even stated that this seems to be typical of what happens. Because of his observations and experience of this dynamic, Wesley insisted the only way to overcome being lost in this "Wilderness State" was by constant vigilance and the use of the means of grace.

Wolberg attests to the importance of the patient's watchfulness over the dynamics involved in their relapse. Wolberg asserts,

However, if he investigates himself and analyzes the causes of each relapse he will realize that the old conflicts that he has explored during therapy have been revived. His ability to understand the circumstances that had restored his trouble will not only help him overcome the relapse, but also will consolidate his understanding solidify new, healthy patterns.³⁴

Wesley, in his sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," states, "There is no place for repentance in him who believes there is no sin in his life or heart; consequently, there is no place for his being perfected in

³²Lindstrom, 116.

³³Ibid., 116.

³⁴Wolberg, 2:754.

love, to which that repentance is indispensably necessary."³⁵

Throughout this study the consciousness of our sinful nature, or emotional disorder, has been stated and restated. This consciousness implies a thorough knowledge of ourselves which in turn exposes us to our need for continual repentance.

Both Wesley and Wolberg agree that a continual self-awareness and watchfulness is needed because of the individual's propensity for backsliding or relapsing. The critical difference is Wesley's understanding of the process to be a religious and spiritual pilgrimage that involves a relationship with God that is primary. The focus of Wesley is on this relationship and how to incorporate the life of God in the soul of man. This focus is totally foreign to Wolberg. In spite of this great dissimilarity, this study again reaffirms a similarity that is important for pastoral psychotherapists to recognize.

To reiterate this point in the language of the methodology of this paper, Wesley's understanding of the need for being watchful throughout the struggle towards perfection in order not to fall back into sin becomes normative in the understanding of Wolberg's ideas of regressions during the final phase of psychotherapy.

Fruits of Repentance

Wesley states what Wolberg also assumes when he discusses the fruits of this repentance in terms of works of

³⁵Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 730-31.

piety and works of mercy. Wolberg assumes that each time a patient works through an issue this will be seen by not only an inward strengthening of the ego, but also observable behavior changes. These changes would include: being assertive and independent; making independent decisions; and establishing independent values and goals.³⁶

Wesley's works of mercy and works of piety are much different than Wolberg's ideas of specific behavioral and attitudinal changes. Works of mercy, according to Wesley, include caring for our neighbor in a number of ways, including visiting those in prison and feeding the hungry. Though both Wolberg and Wesley expect the individual's internal changes to be externally shown by changes in behavior, there is not much agreement on the specific behaviors that emanate from the internal change. Works of piety include public, family and private prayer, reading the Scripture, and communion.³⁷

Repentance, and the fruits of repentance, are necessary for full salvation, though it is always critical to remember they are not as important as faith.³⁸ Or, as Wesley contends,

Though it be allowed, that both this repentance and its fruits are necessary to full salvation; yet they are not necessary either in the same sense with faith, or in the same degree. - Not in the same degree; for these fruits are only necessary conditionally if there be time and opportunity for them; - Not in the same sense; for this repentance and these fruits are only remotely

³⁶Wolberg, 1:387.

³⁷Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 730.

³⁸Ibid., 731.

necessary - necessary in order to the continuance of his faith, as well as the increase of it; whereas faith is immediately and directly necessary to sanctification. It remains that faith is the only condition³⁹ which is immediately necessary to sanctification.

The importance of being saved by faith has little corollary in Wolberg. Wolberg expresses no belief in God. Although he believes in having faith in the goodness of his patients, he has no religious or philosophical basis for understanding human possibility. Although he never states it specifically, Wolberg does seem to have faith in the process of psychotherapy and its healing potential. These "faiths" have some corollaries, but for this study they are beyond the scope of this study.

It would seem that one of the important features of faith is that it gives hope to the individual in a deeper and broader way than is possible through faith in the general goodness of humankind.

Because of our faith we believe in the creative possibilities of persons that are grounded in the doctrine of free will, our consciousness of our own limitations, and on our ability to love others because God first loved us. Because we have this power of faith that is given to us by God, we have hope in our future and confidence that God's ultimate will for our lives can be done either with our cooperation or in spite of ourselves.

The type of mature Christian love that Wesley describes

³⁹Ibid., 731.

in his theology "meets all the specification of the psychological ideal for man - save only their insistence that man must make his way alone, by his own unaided power."⁴⁰

Christian Perfection

Harald Lindstrom claims Wesley interchangeably uses four other terms to describe Christian perfection. These terms are: second blessing, second change, full salvation, and entire sanctification.⁴¹

According to Lindstrom the essence of Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection is perfect, or pure, love.⁴² He expands on Wesley's development of Christian perfection by saying,

The three points of view which determined Wesley's description of Christian perfection are reflections of the view which appears in `a Kempis, Taylor and Law. As in `a Kempis we find tendencies typical of the Catholic tradition in Taylor and Law, especially in the ideal of Imitatio Christi and the idea of intention. Perfection in Wesley was given the primary meanings of purity of intention, the imitation of Christ, and love of God and neighbor.⁴³

Purity of intention implies that the individual turns to God alone. In "The Character of a Methodist," Wesley develops the idea of purity of intention by saying, "His one intention at all times and in all things is, not to please

⁴⁰Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message, 181.

⁴¹Lindstrom, 127. Lindstrom documents his sources as numerous letters and sermons of Wesley.

⁴²Ibid., 127.

⁴³Ibid., 129.

himself, but Him whom his soul loveth. He has a single eye God then reigns alone. All that is in the soul is holiness to the Lord."⁴⁴

Imitating Christ is the second characteristic of Christian perfection. The individual who imitates Christ is described by Wesley as one who "is inwardly and outwardly conformed to the will of God. He thinks, speaks, and lives according to the method laid down in the revelation of Jesus Christ and having the mind that was in Christ, he so walks as Christ also walked."⁴⁵

However, the third characteristic of love of God and love of neighbor is clearly the essence of Christian perfection as outlined by Wesley in "The Character of a Methodist."⁴⁶

Lindstrom describes Christian perfection in the following way:

But the essence of Christian perfection he took to be love of God and our neighbor. Against the hermitic ideal of the mystics, however, he held that human fellowship was an attribute of holiness; and against Quietist mysticism he maintained that love of our neighbour was inseparable from the love of God. Love must be expressed in actions. Thus, at variance with exclusively contemplative, but in agreement with practical mysticism, Wesley contends that both inward and outward holiness are necessary.⁴⁷

Because of the importance Wesley gave to the idea of

⁴⁴Wesley, Works, 8:344.

⁴⁵Ibid., 8:346.

⁴⁶Ibid., 8:341-47.

⁴⁷Lindstrom, 130.

love, Lindstrom devotes one sixth of his exposition on sanctification to the idea of love in Wesleyan theology.

Obviously, love of God and love of neighbor have no real corollaries in Wolberg. The closest Wolberg comes to talking about love of neighbor is in asserting that the patient will develop better interpersonal relationships. His development of interpersonal relationships is based solely on the patient being more satisfied personally with these relationships and does not extend to the patient's concern about their neighbor. Therefore, it is difficult to compare Wolberg to Wesley at this particular juncture. I do believe the Wesleyan doctrine of love of neighbor adds a quality to describing a mature individual that Wolberg needs to consider. It would seem to me that a healthy individual is concerned not only with their own adaptation to the world, but also to the difficulties others are having around them. A psychologically healthy, as well as spiritually healthy, individual should be able to extend themselves and risk emotional hurt without undue fear or avoidance. This is explicit in Wesley's understanding but not even considered in Wolberg. In this way Wesley again has something to add to Wolberg's understanding of a mature individual.

A crucial issue for Wolberg that is partially developed theologically by Wesley is the concept of self-love. Wolberg never uses the word self-love or love of self in his work. He focuses on characteristics and patterns the individual

develops to overcome past conditionings. He describes these characteristics as: assertiveness; self-confidence; expressiveness, a sense of inner peace; a reorganizing of interpersonal relationships; an experiencing of joy in living, and being productive.

Wolberg discusses "a healthy self-regard"⁴⁸ as being one in which the individual comes to grips with their abilities and their limitations. He delineates a balance between love of self and love of others when he states,

Presupposed is a harmonious balance between personal and group standards, and those cultural and individual ideals that contribute both to the welfare of the self and of the group. The individual must be able to function effectively as part of the group, and to give and receive love, and otherwise relate congenially to other humans.⁴⁹

What is significant here is that Wolberg does not espouse the more narcissistic type of self-love that some contemporary authors do.

The type of self regard Wolberg speaks of is essentially compatible with Wesley. The basic difference is in Wesley's grounding of the love of self in the love of God. Wolberg has no self-transcending norm. His norms are based on his observations of what makes a person healthy and happy from a psychological point of view.

What Wolberg has developed is a concept of love that has no explicit religious or Christological basis, but it does

⁴⁸Wolberg, 2:745-46.

⁴⁹Ibid., 2:745.

mirror the regulated concept of Wesley especially in his emphasis on a balance between the individual and others.

From Wolberg's humanistic outlook can be explicated a deeper Christian principle which can affirm Wolberg's view of self-esteem.

Wesley never focuses on self-love as an issue of major import. Lindstrom notes that Wesley does address self-love in positive, though brief, ways in a number of his works, including "The Marks of the New Birth," "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," and a "Letter to the Rev. Dr. Middleton."

The interconnectedness of self-love flows from the love of God and neighbor in an ordered and regulated way according to Lindstrom. He voices the following opinion.

This view is merged with another in which self-love expresses the idea of an ordered and regulated love and is a legitimate form of love. In the exposition of the commandment to love one's neighbour as oneself, self-love is regarded as an obvious pre-requisite. The commandment is understood to mean that equilibrium should be achieved between them. But this self-love must be of such a kind as to harmonize with love to God and neighbour. The same idea emerges clearly when Wesley describes the commandment as a particularly just rule, and the golden rule "the only adequate measure of brotherly love." The harmony achieved by this regulation means there can be no opposition between true self-love and love to our neighbour.⁵⁰

Lindstrom continues in his development of Wesley's idea of self-love by quoting Wesley's commentary on Eph. 5:28 which states that love of ourselves is "not a sin but an

⁵⁰Ibid., 195. The quotation within this quote is from Wesley's "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," found in Works, 8:9.

indisputable duty."⁵¹ According to Lindstrom,

Man has obligations to himself just as he has to God and neighbour. Unregulated self-love is an expression of sin and thus proper self-love acquires the character of regulated love...a conclusion reflected in the directions for practical behavior.⁵²

Wesley develops his thoughts on self-love by saying,

Again: we would that all man should love and esteem us, and behave towards us according to justice, mercy, and truth. And we may reasonably desire that they should do us all the good they can do, without injuring themselves; yea, that in outward things (according to the known rule), their superfluities should give way to our conveniences; and their conveniences to our necessities; and their necessities, to our extremities. Now, then, let us walk by the same rule.⁵³

Lindstrom comments on Wesley's thoughts on self love by stating,

In the treatment of Christian stewardship in his sermon, "The Use of Money" (1760) self-love and neighbourly love appear as forms of an ordered love grounded on love to God.⁵⁴

He sums up Wesley's view on self-love by stating,

Self-love, then must not be regarded as a rival to the love of God. The latter renders the former legitimate. Like neighbourly love, self-love operates within the framework of the love of God. Thus it is this love that constitutes the quintessence of sanctification.⁵⁵

To compare the idea of self-love in Wesley to Wolberg's ideas about self-esteem is difficult. What Wesley offers

⁵¹Wesley, Explanatory Notes, 500.

⁵²Lindstrom, 196.

⁵³Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 391-92.

⁵⁴Lindstrom, 196.

⁵⁵Ibid., 197.

Wolberg is an emphasis on love of neighbor that flows from God and is balanced by love of self. What Wolberg offers Wesley is a more developed, and more complete view of love of self. That modern psychoanalytic psychotherapy long understood the importance of self-love is hardly debatable. That it has over-emphasized self-love at the expense of loving others seems to be a fair criticism, even though Wolberg does not seem to do this.

Wesley balances modern theory with its more narcissistic trend with the necessity of love of God and love of neighbor. This is an area where family systems theory would be much more sensitive than psychoanalytic theory to interconnectedness of the individual to family and community. The idea of love of neighbor could, therefore, be more easily critiqued from systems theory.

Wesley summarizes his idea of love in his sermon, "On Patience," by stating,

Love is the sum of Christian sanctification; it is the one kind of holiness, which is found only in various degrees, in believers who are distinguished by St. John into 'little children, young men, and fathers.'⁵⁶

Much time has been devoted to Wesley's idea of love, which is not a step in the order of salvation, because of its great importance in the theology of Wesley, especially as a characteristic of Christian perfection.

An important understanding about Wesley's concept of

⁵⁶Wesley, Works, 6:488.

Christian perfection is the paradox that Christian perfection is not absolute perfection. Lindstrom explains this paradox in the following way. "Yet the perfection he taught was attainable in this life was not absolute perfection. It was perfection subject to the limitations of human life."⁵⁷

Wesley's sermon on "Christian Perfection" explains this problem. Wesley declares,

Christian perfection, therefore, does not imply (as some men seem to have imagined) an exemption either from ignorance, or mistake, or infirmities, or temptations. Indeed it is only another term for holiness. Thus, everyone that is holy is, in the scripture sense, perfect. Yet we may, lastly, observe, that neither in this respect is there any absolute perfection on earth.⁵⁸

Lindstrom states that, "This apparent contradiction is due to his use of two different concepts of perfection and a corresponding duality in the terms law and sin."⁵⁹ He continues by arguing that Wesley

employs a concept of relative perfection and a concept of absolute perfection. The former is subjective and concerns the intention and will, the latter is objective and independent of man's potentialities. This duality means that on the one hand he does not regard the defects of the fully sanctified as sins in the proper sense of the word. On the other hand these mistakes and defects can also be regarded as sins in the sense they constitute deviations from the perfect law.⁶⁰

Lindstrom argues that the idea of perfection and the

⁵⁷Lindstrom, 145.

⁵⁸Wesley, Fifty-Three Sermons, 512.

⁵⁹Lindstrom, 150.

⁶⁰Ibid., 150.

idea of law were adjusted to fit this circumstance.⁶¹ Since no one can fulfill the Adamic law, God subjects the Christian only to the law of faith.⁶²

This means that it is only through faith that man can be sanctified and glorified as well as justified. As this law of faith is fulfilled through love Wesley can also call it the law of love. Faith is considered the foundation of "the Christian institution," love its end.⁶³

It is also important to note that because of their transgressions even those who are perfected in Christian love are still in need of the atonement. Lindstrom explains this linkage by adding,

For Wesley, Christians, even the most sanctified, must live on the basis of forgiveness. That this is so in spite of everything is due to the fact that alongside a relative and subjective perfection - the concept of perfection which makes possible his doctrine of perfection - he retains the conception of an objective, and absolute perfection and a corresponding idea of sin.⁶⁴

There is a continual need of forgiveness on the part of the fully sanctified as well as the possibility of perfection. The tension of these two being held together is a basis for understanding the growth process in psychotherapy. It is understood in psychotherapy that a certain amount of tension and anxiety is necessary to promote growth. The key is balancing the amount of tension so the patient neither gets too passive from the lack of tension, nor expresses

⁶¹Ibid., 146.

⁶²Ibid., 147.

⁶³Ibid., 147.

⁶⁴Ibid., 152.

"depression, hostility, aggression, or psychosomatic symptoms,"⁶⁵ from experiencing too much tension in the psychotherapeutic relationship.

Wolberg discusses the "Stimulation of Tension and Anxiety"⁶⁶ by using interpretations. Essentially interpretation is used to "upset the balance between the repressed and the repressing forces."⁶⁷ By upsetting this balance tension is produced. "This affect may be desirable where there is little activity in the therapeutic process."⁶⁸

Though this issue of creating tension in order to break deadlocks in the process is not discussed at much length by Wolberg, there is an important factor in the growth process that is encouraged by maintaining the proper tension between a feeling of acceptance and security and a sense of needing to be constantly watchful over your own growth process.

In this particular instance Wolberg explicitly states what Wesley implies about the need for the right amount of tension throughout the process. The tension produced creates energy and excitement about the individual's own condition. Wesley seems to realize this, though he never explicitly states this dynamic, in his development of dichotomies in his concept of Christian perfection.

⁶⁵Wolberg, 1:597.

⁶⁶Ibid., 1:597.

⁶⁷Ibid., 1:591.

⁶⁸Ibid., 1:597.

Albert C. Outler develops the connection between Christian perfection and holiness in his book, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit. He also reaffirms Lindstrom's evaluation of the essence of Christian perfection by claiming,

What mattered most was that "going on to perfection" has a consistent character and a clear end in view: (1) love (of God and neighbor), (2) trust (in Christ and the sufficiency of his grace) and (3) joy (joy updwelling in the heart from the "prevenience" of the indwelling spirit). This is "holy living": to love God and neighbor with all your heart, to trust securely in Christ's merits, and to live joyously "in the Spirit"!⁶⁹

For Outler the three pillars of a Wesleyan theology are original sin, justification by faith, and holiness of heart and life.⁷⁰ Holiness of heart and life is synonymous with Christian perfection.

Outler develops the idea of holiness and happiness as being the same. Outler claims, "We have fifty-four quotes when Wesley explicitly pairs off 'happy and holy' (or vice versa) and the correlation is constant throughout his works and his career."⁷¹ Outler, in his footnote supporting this tenet, quotes Martin Schmidt's work, John Wesley: A Theological Biography, claiming Schmidt says, "Holiness and happiness is (Wesley's) favorite formula."⁷²

⁶⁹Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, 72.

⁷⁰Ibid., 23. Outler documents his sources for this belief by quoting from the volume of Wesley's Works containing his "Letters," 4:146 and 237.

⁷¹Ibid., 84.

⁷²Schmidt, 215.

Outler pronounces that he was surprised to learn this fact about Wesley and continues to develop the connection between happiness and holiness by advancing the following thought.

This man (Wesley) was a eudaemonist, convinced and consistent all his life. All his emphases on duty and discipline are auxiliary to his main concern for human happiness (blessedness, etc.)⁷³

Outler unwraps this issue even more clearly by comparing unholiness to holiness. He informs us,

In a hundred different ways, Wesley repeats the thesis: human unhappiness, in any and all its forms, comes from setting our love of creation above our love of the Creator, our love of self above our love of neighbor. But this is the generic definition of **unholiness**: innocent love corrupted by false loves. Thus he can argue that only the holy are truly happy, only the hallowed life is truly blessed, only the truly loving are actually joyful. The human potential is not self-fulfilling - and in any case it is bracketed by transience and death. All our truly human aspirations are self-transcending: they point to the love of God and neighbor as their true norms. But this is the essence of **holiness**. Inward holiness is, preeminently, our love of God, the love of God above all else and all else in God. Outward holiness is our consequent love of neighbor (all God's children, every accessible human being whom we may serve) with a love that springs from our love of God and that seeks the neighbor's well-being as the precondition of our own proper self-love.⁷⁴

This quote points us back to Wesley's understanding of being saved by faith. As Outler expresses it,

Thus, "faith alone" remains as the threshold of all true holiness in heart and life - and of human happiness - here and hereafter. Wesley analyzes this in a remarkable trio of sermons on "The Law Established Through Faith." Faith stands first (*sola fide*) but not as an end in itself. Nor

⁷³Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, 81.

⁷⁴Ibid., 82-83.

is it a meritorious act, as many fundamentalists seem to insist. Rather, faith is a means in order to love just as love is in order to goodness, just as goodness is in order to happiness - which is what God made us for, in this world - and the next. This is "holy living."⁷⁵

Secondly, the importance of the idea of happiness for this study is that Wolberg's descriptions of the ideal results of psychotherapy sound much like a definition of happiness. He sets forth the following as a description of how an individual is transformed through psychotherapy:

there is a reorganization of interpersonal relationships and a more realistic reintegration between self and its past experiences. Signs of abandonment of compulsive patterns are registered in a sense of inner peace, happiness, security, and absence of neurotic suffering. These positive gains serve as resistance barriers to old neurotic attitudes whenever these tend to force the individual into previous modes. With expanding emancipation from his past, the patient becomes more self confident, assertive, and expressive. He accepts as his right the making of salutary choices and decisions and the establishment of new values. As the ego of the patient expands, the superego loses its force and tyranny. The patient appreciates joy in living and the experiencing of fruitful productivity.⁷⁶

In another section of his book Wolberg reiterates this point by stating,

What a therapist hopes to effect in reconstructive therapy is a building of security in the person so that that individual no longer feels menaced by fears of the world. In addition self esteem must be enhanced to the point of self confidence, assertiveness, and creative self fulfillment. Each individual must gain respect for oneself without striving for perfectionism or superiority. Relationships with people must become harmonious and shorn of such impulses as dependency, detachment, and aggression. Finally, one must become capable of

⁷⁵Ibid., 85-86.

⁷⁶Wolberg, 1:358.

satisfying inner needs and demands without anxiety and in conformity with the standards of the group.⁷⁷

For both Wolberg and Wesley the goal is a change in the personality. For Wesley this means a perfecting of the personality. Lindstrom describes Wesley's view of perfecting the personality in the following way.

Entire sanctification becomes a perfecting of the personality. It is clear from what has been said that to Wesley perfection is not only perfection in actual acts; it embraces as well the whole disposition which lies behind them, the soul with all its tempers. He sees perfection as perfection in obedience too, but this is an expression of the inward perfection of the personality or character.

Thus to Wesley perfection means the perfected and harmonious personality. It is presented as a perfection of character. Christianity in general can be considered not only as "a principle in the soul" but also as "a scheme or system of doctrine which describes the character."⁷⁸

It appears to me that Wesley sees the individual as being liberated from the forces of sin and therefore is able to love God and neighbor. Wolberg, on the other hand sees the individual as being liberated from blocks in psychosocial development with the result being a greatly increased ability to love self and coordinately to develop more gratifying relationships with other persons.⁷⁹

For Wesley, it is faith that is given to us by God that allows us to grow. For Wolberg, growth is determined only by

⁷⁷Ibid., 1:524.

⁷⁸Lindstrom, 158-59. The quotation is from Wesley in a "Letter to Rev. Dr. Middleton," found in Works, 9:72.

⁷⁹Wolberg, 1:5.

the internal and emotional and external and environmental and financial resources of the patient.⁸⁰

The difference in philosophies is summed up by Outler in the following quote.

Finally, the humanistic psychotherapy is almost bound to rest its hopes on what man can yet do for himself, if the conditions are made favorable. The Christian is (or ought to be) as anxious as any other to reduce the deprivations and denials which come to men in their common life. But his confidence in the validity and success of his ventures rests on what God has already done for man and the favorable conditions already established in which men can enter into and share the victory over evil won by Christ.

We must seek to guide men to seek their health and well-being, always in the strong assurance that it is God who works in us to give increase to every faithful human response. Our ultimate confidence is not in ourselves, nor in man or nature, but in God - who has made us for Himself and made us to be ourselves and who will not leave his work unfinished.⁸¹

Wolberg's understanding that the goal of psychotherapy is that the patient is liberated from internal emotional blocks and is therefore able to develop more satisfying relationships and be at peace with themselves. Wesley's view that the individual becomes freed from the domination of sin, and is therefore able to love God and neighbor, becomes the theological assumption which forms the basis from which Wolberg's thought is understood.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter Wesley's understanding of repentance in believers provides a backdrop from which to understand

⁸⁰Ibid., 2:746.

⁸¹Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message, 193-94.

Wolberg's ideas about relapses and the general difficulty of the patient to maintain their progress toward psychological maturity. The relapses Wolberg speaks of have behind them the theological assumptions that Wesley expounds in his work on repentance in believers. Repentance in believers provides a theological norm from which we can compare and contrast Wolberg's psychotherapeutic findings. Termination in psychotherapy, as Wolberg develops it, has at its roots a hidden theological assumption that has been explicated by using Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection.

In Wesley Christian perfection connotes a humanness and vulnerability to sin that requires a constant vigilance. Wolberg sees termination of therapy as a formal operation of discontinuing sessions, but claims that therapy is an ongoing process that requires the patient to continually analyze themselves and their dynamics in order to avoid falling back into old dysfunctional patterns. Wolberg understands that there is no perfecting of the human personality, but that it is a never-ending process of growth. In this sense both Wesley and Wolberg are similar in their understanding of perfection and termination. Wolberg makes his deductions based on his observations and experiences with clients. Wesley, in a practical way, has clearly stated there is no real perfection in the absolute sense of the term.

Wesley's theology can be used as a basis for understanding the constant tension between growth and decay in

both a psychological and spiritual way. His development of the concept of Christian perfection provides us with both the possibilities of human growth and the limitations of human growth.

Wesley provides a system for understanding the order of salvation which is particularly sensitive to the inner links of the process. Wolberg mirrors this in his outline of psychotherapy by identifying certain themes and issues such as transference and countertransference that are dynamics to be dealt with at each phase of therapy.

Finally, the conception of salvation as a dynamic process can become a basis for understanding all of life as well as a psychotherapeutic process. Without movement toward greater health there is disintegration and even death. This is true from a Wesleyan perspective of the order of salvation. However, Wolberg never deals with the issue of either growing or moving toward a more dysfunctional pattern. He seems to believe in a homeostasis that psychological defenses can provide. Though he understands the dysfunction of certain defenses, he does not show how they lead to further dysfunction or emotional deterioration of the patient. In other words, Wolberg believes a patient can remain static in their level of functioning.

This becomes an area where Wesley's dynamic view of change can provide a normative view of human growth and dysfunction for Wolberg. Any dysfunction tends to carry with

it further attempts to solidify the individual's current position. These further attempts to solidify the individual's position generally produce more dysfunction in the individual's life rather than solidifying their present position.

In this way Wesley's understanding of the nature of our humanness provides a theological basis from which the understanding of our psychological selves can be expanded.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusions

The general outline of this chapter will be fourfold. First, Wesley's order of salvation from original sin to Christian perfection will be outlined in a manner that gives an overview of how his order of salvation has explicated the implicit theological assumptions hidden in Lewis R. Wolberg's process of psychotherapy. This will include an examination of the thesis of this paper and conclusions drawn from this study.

Secondly, the basic differences in Wesley and Wolberg will be noted. Thirdly, areas for further study of the issues brought up in this study will be delineated. Finally, the importance of this study for pastoral psychotherapists will be explored.

Overview

The assumption that Wesley's order of salvation can serve as an ontological basis for understanding the steps taken in the process of psychotherapy has been demonstrated in each chapter of this paper. To highlight the conclusions drawn from each stage I will briefly outline the findings of this study.

It has been concluded that original sin, as Wesley develops it, provides a norm from which to understand psychotherapy through the use of five concepts. These

include: (1) Wesley's view of the importance of our understanding the depth of our sinfulness and our sinful nature; (2) the importance of our consciousness of the disease; (3) our need for help from outside of ourselves to cure the disease; (4) the hope upon which a cure or transformation is based; and (5) the concept of free will.

Wesley, through his concept of original sin, develops the depth of our sinfulness as being a universal phenomenon. The importance of understanding both the depth of the disease as well as the breadth of it provides a theological basis from which to explicate Wolberg's hidden theological understandings of the human condition as it is presented in the psychotherapist's office.

The consciousness of our sinfulness becomes the foundation to compare the importance of self-awareness in psychotherapy as a first step toward recovery. Wesley's theological assumptions are again found in Wolberg and provide a theological basis from which to understand the process of psychotherapy.

Thirdly, the need for help from outside of ourselves in order to be healed is developed by Wesley and Wolberg. The critical difference is in the assumption by Wesley that God is the source of outside help that is needed as opposed to Wolberg's assumption that a psychotherapist is needed.

The hope upon which a cure is based is in admitting our need for help from outside of ourselves. Wesley's

understanding of our dependence on God becomes the ontological basis for this understanding. The development of this idea includes our inability to change ourselves by an act of self-will. Our dependence on others, especially God, for what we are and what we can become is clear.

Finally, a fifth way Wesley's doctrine of original sin provides us with insight into the human predicament is through the concept of free will. Wesley balances the idea of determinism and free will and this provides a resource in our understanding of the idea of choice in psychotherapy.

In this section it begins to be clear that behind the psychotherapist's assumptions about human nature and the human condition lie theological assumptions which can inform and expand psychological understandings of the human quandary.

Wesley's ideas about atonement were expanded by Oden, Browning, and Daniel Day Williams in order to establish the atonement as the basis for understanding the psychotherapeutic dynamic of developing a working relationship based on empathy and acceptance of each person. Wesley's view of atonement also balances this with an understanding of the consequences our behaviors have on others as well as on ourselves.

The concept of prevenient grace and the role of the conscience in giving us the ability to know ourselves provide us with an analogy between the conscience's function in prevenient grace and the function and role of insight in psychotherapy. Through prevenient grace (conscience) we see

ourselves as we really are just as in psychotherapy the patient is confronted with their own dysfunctional patterns through the inculcation of insight.

The rudiments of an order of salvation as developed through the concepts of original sin, atonement and prevenient grace become clearly a basis for understanding the initial phase of psychotherapy.

Repentance before justification implies both a knowledge of our sinfulness and a need to change. This self-knowledge provides a motivation to change and produces a sense in the individual of their dependence on others to produce and maintain both the motivation to change and the vehicle by which they can change. It provides a theological basis for understanding Wolberg's assertion that the patient must acknowledge their own part in their dysfunction, and, because of the emotional pain this dysfunction causes, become motivated to change their feelings, attitudes and behaviors.

Works before justification were essentially used as a format for understanding the repetition compulsion in clients and its destructive effects. Behaviors repeated before a certain level of emotional adjustment tend to be compulsively repeated in a way that keeps the individual stuck in their present position.

Justification as pardon, forgiveness and acceptance was used as a basis for understanding self esteem and self worth. Using the acceptance we receive at justification as a basis

for risking intimacy was discussed. As this study unfolded it became clear that the process of psychotherapy could be seen as a theological as well as a psychological process.

The New Birth and Wesley's ideas about gradual and instantaneous change were compared to Wolberg's ideas of change. Although Wolberg recognizes spontaneous cures, he does not allow for instantaneous change throughout the psychotherapy process. Wesley's view of integrating the gradual and the instantaneous elements is seen as more realistic and more hopeful, given the way both elements are experienced in our everyday lives as well as in psychotherapy.

Marks of the New Birth are compared to changes seen in the patient in the Middle Phase of Treatment as outlined by Wolberg. This includes both changes in the understanding of ourselves and changes in behavior. Both Wesley and Wolberg concur at the point of believing that more than self-knowledge is required for healing to take place. Positive action and behavioral change are equally as important. Wesley's understandings are again seen as normative for the process of psychotherapy.

Wesley's doctrine of assurance reaffirms the fact that the individual is never completely free from doubt and fear. The need for a balance of tension and security is necessary for the individual to grow in either the spiritual or emotional realms. The sense of security given by assurance is documented by Wolberg. The result of this sense of security

is the increased amount of faith and trust the client has in the therapist. The importance of the client-therapist relationship is a thread that re-appears throughout the process of psychotherapy. It is again seen as the fulcrum for change.

In chapter 3, Repentance in Believers is compared to relapses in therapy. The general hypothesis is the constant need to be watchful over our spiritual and emotional condition. There is always a tension between the possibility of change and growth and the power of the individual to fall back into old, dysfunctional patterns. Wesley's view on repentance in believers provides a basis from which to understand Wolberg's thesis that patients always carry around with them remnants of their past which are disruptive and, which may not be able to be overcome even with the help of therapy.

Finally, Christian perfection is compared to the terminal phase of treatment in Wolberg. It is noted that these processes are dynamic as opposed to static. They are also never-ending processes throughout the course of life. Another dynamic of the interconnectedness of various issues and phases was discussed. The idea of happiness and holiness as developed by Wesley is used as a basis for evaluating the goals of psychotherapy.

The conclusion drawn from this study is that when the process of psychotherapy is evaluated by and critiqued from

the standpoint of Wesley's soteriology, the process of psychotherapy can be seen as a theological process. A secondary conclusion is that the theological understandings of the process of psychotherapy help to broaden and deepen the understandings of the human quandary and the steps taken on the path to wholeness.

These conclusions are not meant to, and do not, diminish what psychotherapy has to offer theology, but simply help those of us who are pastoral counselors to reclaim the theological dimension of our work. This study helps pastoral counselors see the insights theology, and particularly Wesley, have to offer psychotherapy.

Another conclusion is the reaffirmation that all of reality, including psychotherapy, is based on the reality of God.

These conclusions, in and of themselves, may not be unique or different, but they are important. For a generation of pastoral counselors that have been trained theologically by reflecting on psychological processes by adding a few short thoughts at the end of their study to pay homage to theology, this study helps reverse that trend and see the importance of theological reflection for psychotherapy.

By using Wesley's theology as a norm for understanding psychotherapy, theology has become more than just an ancillary technique. It becomes the basic framework out of which we see God as the reality upon which we base our understandings.

Theology is used in this study as a unifying center from which we learn more about the brokenness of the human condition and the understandings upon which that brokenness can be healed.

Divergences

Some of the basic differences between Wesley and Wolberg are outlined below.

1. Wesley's fundamental belief that the individual is saved by a faith that is given by God is the major difference between himself and Wolberg.

2. A corollary of this difference is the self-determinism of Wolberg that is much more radical than Wesley's idea of free will.

3. Wesley's idea of self love is regulated by, and based on, love of God and love of neighbor. Wolberg's formulation has more of an emphasis on assertiveness, independence, and more harmonious relationships with other persons.

4. The idea of conscience in Wesley is a positive factor that promotes growth, whereas in Wolberg, conscience is seen to be much more tyrannical and to be much more of a negative factor.

5. The understanding of how change occurs and the differences between gradual and instantaneous change has been discussed as a difference in the two authors.

6. Another difference between Wesley and Wolberg is the issue of the time frame in which the order of salvation

occurs versus the time frame in which psychotherapy takes place.

The fundamental differences of looking at an order of salvation developed in the eighteenth century and comparing this to a process of psychotherapy developed two centuries later is difficult. The differences between Wesley's religious outlook compared to Wolberg's modern psychotherapeutic stance are manifold. The fact that there are as many issues that can be correlated is probably the most amazing fact of this study.

1. The first basic and most essential difference between Wesley and Wolberg is the issue of faith in God. Albert Outler has addressed this difference in his book, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message. In his chapter on "Allies and Rivals" he calls this difference a "clash of first principles."¹ The psychotherapist who is involved with the depths of human emotions and situations may, or may not, believe that anything transcends our natural order. The critique given in the first chapter of this paper is that psychotherapy assumes the individual is the only, and the final, referent for themselves. The Christian faith assumes that God is the ground of being and the final reality confronted in life.

Wolberg clearly believes that the individual is self-contained and is the measure of all things. In the process of

¹Outler, Psychotherapy and the Christian Message, 51.

psychotherapy that he describes, Wolberg sees the patient as growing in faith in themselves during the process. Any notion of dependency on others, would be seen as an unhealthy adaptation at best.

Wolberg addresses the "Conflicts Between Religion and Psychotherapy" in a brief section that discusses "The Minister in Mental Health." In this section he attempts to sort out and define the boundaries between religion and psychotherapy. Wolberg believes a rapprochement between the clergyperson's role in mental health and the psychotherapist's role is possible if both parties respect each other's roles and standards by which they conduct themselves. Both parties have unique roles in the process of healing.

Wolberg also notes some significant similarities between the goals of salvation and the goals of psychotherapy. While the psychotherapist would not interfere with an individual's decision to seek conversion or salvation. If the therapist deemed such an objective as appropriate, the therapist would be looking for ways religion is used to meet neurotic needs.

Obviously, Wolberg is trying to be sensitive to the role of conversion to religion and the individual pursuit of salvation and the role these have in restoring mental health. It would be fair to say that Wolberg sees religion as an ally during the process of psychotherapy. Religion is recognized as a means to help the patient move toward a more healthy way

of functioning. It needs to be noted, however, that in no way does Wolberg propose that religion, or an order of salvation, should be used as a normative way of looking at the process of moving toward health. Though Wolberg does not seem to be against religion, he views it from its applicability to psychotherapy in order to form its usefulness for him. This particular study has as its objective the different purpose of using an order of salvation as the standard by which to evaluate and inform the process of psychotherapy.

Wolberg also notes some of the relationships between psychotherapy and faith. Wolberg believes that psychotherapy can help the individual come to religious decisions from a more mature perspective. It would encourage or discourage patients based on the individual's inner dynamics and level of neurosis.

Though Wolberg is not opposed to religion it still must be noted that there is the significant difference of the framework out of which Wesley and Wolberg work. This "clash of first principles"² is evidenced in the point at which theology begins and ends and the point at which psychotherapy begins and ends. The need for a more unifying and broad based philosophical framework out of which the psychotherapist could work remains unaddressed by Wolberg. This is precisely the focus of this study.

2. A second difference between Wolberg and Wesley is

²Ibid., 51.

focused around the issue of free will and determinism. It is clear that Wesley's approach to this begins with his understanding of prevenient grace and our freedom to choose whether or not we will respond to the promptings of God. Wesley's understanding of freedom throughout his order of salvation is that the individual always has the freedom to reject God's offer of grace. Stated in a more positive way, the individual has the freedom to respond to God's offer and the freedom to respond at each moment in time. The individual cannot, however, independently of God and by an act of self will, supply themselves with the tools necessary to be saved. This comes only from the realization of our complete dependency on God.

In Wolberg, the only factors that deter the individual from psychological health are severe psychopathology, financial restraints, and stubborn resistances that the individual does not seem to be able to work through. Other than these limitations the individual is seen as self determining throughout the psychotherapeutic process. Though this may sound much more optimistic than Wesley's view, it is important to note that Wolberg understands that most patients either do not have the motivation to use psychotherapy as a vehicle for personality reconstruction, or do not have the emotional strength to make the difficult changes in personality that are needed to be psychologically healthy. Most patients settle for relief of their troubling symptoms.

Wesley's stance toward growth seems to be more passive and more descriptive of what God does for us and in us. Wolberg sees the individual as essentially self determined. This difference is of significant proportions and again brings us back to Wesley's understanding of God as the author of all change and healing as the basic point of contention.

3. The issue of self love as it presents itself in an order of salvation and a process of psychotherapy raises a number of convergences and divergences. First, it can be said that both Wolberg and Wesley promote the idea of self love. However, it would be a drastic overstatement to assume that Wesley would make self love a major emphasis in his theology. If anything, he was much more concerned that the individual see their sinfulness and their evil nature as a prerequisite for change. Lindstrom pointed out Wesley's development of self love as being ultimately an expression of love to God. Though self love is considered by Wesley to be a legitimate form of Christian love, it is regulated and made legitimate by the love of God.

Many authors, such as Albert Outler, Carroll Wise, and Thomas Oden, have tried to keep this balance between love of God and love of neighbor, and love of self. Some authors have criticized modern day psychotherapy as promoting a more narcissistic type of self love to the exclusion of love of others. I do not believe Wolberg does this intentionally. It must be noted, as can be evidenced in the quotes from him

earlier in this chapter, that he is more interested in focusing on these issues as they present themselves in psychotherapy as a problem to be solved. Building one's self esteem and self confidence are critical issues in the process of psychotherapy. Wolberg, however, does seem to see self love as independent from love of neighbor and would not correlate it to love of God. The understanding of the need for self love and the salugenic effects of self love is much more developed in Wolberg than in Wesley. In this way, Wolberg adds a dimension to the religious understanding of love of self that is important to incorporate in an order of salvation.

4. The dimension in Wolberg of looking at the negative effects and the improper development of a particular religious dynamic can be seen in how he compares the thoughts about conscience and guilt in psychotherapy and in religion. Wolberg develops this comparison by saying that the concepts of sin and guilt play a role in a properly restrained social society. Guilt and conscience are seen as the seat of necessary moral and ethical standards that are essential for society's functioning. Psychotherapy does not attempt to assuage guilt unless it becomes pathological. Wolberg would hope that religion and psychotherapy could agree on the importance of rational guilt feelings as opposed to neurotic guilt feelings. When religion does foster abnormal guilt feelings it is the role of psychotherapy to mollify these

feelings.

This formulation is not unlike Thomas Oden's in his book Guilt Free. Wesley sees guilt being forgiven and pardoned when the individual is justified.

An obvious comparison that can be made is the idea of conscience in Wesley and the way conscience is used in Wolberg. In this study we used Wesley's idea of conscience as a basis for understanding Wolberg's development of the concept of insight in psychotherapy.

5. The ideas about how change occurs in individuals was discussed in chapter 3 under the heading of Wesley's understanding of gradual and instantaneous change. Because this was dealt with in some detail in chapter 3 it will only be briefly summarized here. Wesley's combination of the gradual and the instantaneous in his view of how the individual changes gives a more dynamic flavor to the process of human growth than the more mechanical view of Wolberg. Because Wesley believes that a person can be saved in an instant or be fully sanctified in an instant, a quality of hope and expectation is added to his process that seems to be absent in Wolberg's formulation of change. Wolberg's critique of instantaneous or spontaneous cures is that they generally seem to be of a more defensive nature than of a salutary nature. Though he does not dismiss the possibility of instantaneous change, Wolberg is quite skeptical about this type of change during the process of psychotherapy. He sees

the process as being more of an uncovering process that gives an individual insight which then helps them slowly work through their emotional blocks and finally change dysfunctional behaviors. Wesley does add a more wholistic view of change. His thoughts on instantaneous change help us to reflect on those times and situations when a patient has seemed to be genuinely and spontaneously cured.

6. The problem of the time frame of both an order of salvation and a process of psychotherapy has at the heart of it the issue of beginnings and endings. Wesley begins and ends his order of salvation at different levels and in different time frames than Wolberg does.

The individual starts on the path to salvation the moment they are born and is never removed from this path. In psychotherapy the process only starts when the individual consciously and clearly requests formal meetings. Although technically the process of psychotherapy never ends, the formal meetings are, at some point in the individual's life, discontinued. Wesley's order of salvation is not only a life long process, but it also continues after the individual ceases to live. These differences have essentially been ignored in this study since there does not appear any real way to reconcile them.

Finally, a word is in order about the general discussion of differences and similarities between the two areas under comparison in this study. It is clear that there

are basic and fundamental differences between Wesley's order of salvation and Wolberg's process of psychotherapy. Thomas Oden discusses the differences between theological understandings and psychotherapeutic practices in his section on "The Limitations of Analogical Thinking" in his book, Kerygma and Counseling. He claims,

Any analogy between divine life and interpersonal processes is limited by the fact that it is always only a partial correspondence. For this reason the concept of analogy must be strictly distinguished from the concept of parity which asserts simple synonymity between our language and God's being.³

Oden continues his discussion by quoting Barth's assertion that the analogical process is working with "a similarity in spite of a greater dissimilarity."⁴ Essentially Oden is quoting Barth as saying there is a "partial similarity of different things."⁵

Though this is evident throughout this study it is important to reaffirm this point.

Areas for Further Study

A number of possibilities for further study have emerged from this study. One possibility would be a more focused and in-depth study of each individual stage in the order of salvation as it relates to psychotherapeutic and emotional development themes. This would be much less

³Oden, Kerygma and Counseling, 122.

⁴Ibid., 122.

⁵Ibid., 123.

process oriented than the present study and would allow for a wider development of both the theological and the psychological points of view.

A second possibility for further study would be to examine the internal links of each stage and phase and to delineate how the interconnectedness effects the development of various issues.

Another study might compare family systems theory, as opposed to psychoanalytic theory, to Wesley's understanding of instantaneous and gradual change. Wesley's doctrine of original sin could be correlated to systems theory's understanding of dysfunction in a family. And finally, Wesley's connections between love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self certainly demonstrate how love grows in a systemic way as opposed to more individualistic understandings of this process. Overall, Wesley is more sensitive to the interconnectedness of all of life than Wolberg demonstrates in his work. An examination of Wesley from a systems point of view might yield some interesting findings.

Another study could be done Wesley's views on mental, physical and spiritual health as they compare to current thought concerning wholistic health. His component of adding small group interaction as a way to enhance the individual's health and functioning could be added to the wholistic philosophy. A separate study comparing Wesley's uses of groups to the use of group psychotherapy is also a

possibility.

A more detailed study of Wesley's view of how change occurs could be focused on the cultural-historical context out of which Wesley developed his view of change. This would include what cultural understandings shaped Wesley's view of change and how these compare to the cultural understandings of change that affected the psychoanalytic theories of change. The discussion of the difference and overlapping of these sources would be an interesting subject for inquiry.

Finally, further study needs to be focused on how a theoretical paper such as this can be practically integrated into the psychotherapeutic hour. From a personal point of view, there are some practical results of this study in my therapy with clients.

1. The process of psychotherapy can be more clearly seen as being a religious and spiritual journey as well as an emotional process of development.

2. The ability to be able to be more patient and accepting of clients when they seem to be unable to change, or resistant to change is another result. This has happened by reflecting on Wesley's doctrine of original sin and the depths of the problems clients face.

3. It has been easier to be aware of, and more apt to point out, that the client has a freedom of choice about both how fast they change and whether or not they want to change.

4. The offer of grace and acceptance to clients as

they are, and where they are, clearly comes from the experience of God's acceptance of me.

5. Therapy has been framed not just as a process of feeling better about ourselves, but also as a process of being able to, and wanting to, love others in a more healthy and meaningful way.

Importance of This Study

The basic importance of this study for pastoral psychotherapists is essentially a methodology which does not assume that theology and psychotherapy are two separate and distinct spheres. This methodology takes the explicit theological assumptions developed by John Wesley in his order of salvation and uses them to explicate various assumptions in the process of psychotherapy that have as their basis theological understandings. What has been found is that these explicit theological assumptions are found in the understandings of the individual during the development of the psychotherapeutic process. By comparing these assumptions and using Wesley's theology to expand and inform Wolberg's model, a re-claiming of theological resources in the understanding of psychotherapy has occurred. This methodology has reaffirmed the wisdom of traditional theological thinking in its basic understanding of persons and its understanding of the process of healing.

Another benefit of this study for pastoral psychotherapists is that by assuming a person's relationship

with God is a norm by which to understand both the psychotherapeutic relationship and the psychotherapeutic process, the psychotherapeutic process can be viewed as a theological process. Thus, the pastoral psychotherapist can see a theological order in psychotherapy and have a more systematized and integrated view of what is occurring during the psychotherapeutic hour. Seeing the psychotherapeutic process as a theological process is the essential assumption of this paper. It is important to note that even though there are basic differences, theology can provide important and critical understandings of the human condition and show how this quandary can be overcome. This enables us to see psychological processes as having at their core theological issues.

Psychotherapeutic and theological processes are not identical, but in spite of their dissimilarities, there are similarities. The theological process of salvation can offer a theoretical basis from which the psychotherapeutic process can be understood.

John Wesley's order of salvation has helped to explicate the theological assumptions implied in Wolberg's process of psychotherapy.

To state this in Thomas Oden's style, it could be argued that the whole ordo salutis of John Wesley is recapitulated in the language of the process of

psychotherapy.⁶

By using Wesley's order of salvation as a theoretical and philosophical framework from which to view and critique the process of psychotherapy, the scope and perception of the theological nature of the work of the pastoral psychotherapist has been expanded. To use this method and to integrate it into the work of pastoral psychotherapy will keep theological and religious issues in the forefront, as opposed to post-therapeutic hour reflection.

Another benefit of this study is that the ultimate nature of the questions clients raise has been given the depth of religious and theological thought as well as psychological thought. The theological and theoretical nature of this study has allowed the Wesleyan heritage to speak to these questions and to give a framework from which these questions can be addressed.

Whether a psychotherapist who had a theological perspective similar to Wesley would do psychotherapy in a unique way is not the question this study attempts to answer. This study of Wesley offers no new ways of doing psychotherapy, but it does provide a unique theological basis for understanding psychotherapy. John Wesley's specific steps and stages of salvation are unique. His understandings of the order of these steps in the process of salvation is unique. The using of this order to explicate theological issues in the

⁶Ibid., 102.

process of psychotherapy provides not only a uniquely Wesleyan theology for understanding the issues confronted in psychotherapy, it also provides a theological process from which to compare a psychological process. The similarities of the two processes of moving from disease toward wholeness has been an affirmation of the traditional wisdom of theology, and Wesley, to provide a framework out of which the insights of psychotherapy can be analyzed and added to.

Has the problem of this study of how theology can inform the process of psychotherapy been faced and solutions given? The order of salvation as developed by John Wesley has proven a valuable and unique resource in accomplishing this task. Clearly, Wesley's order of salvation has focused our attention on theological issues arising from Wolberg's process of psychotherapy and has expanded our theoretical base for understanding the psychotherapeutic process from a theological point of view.

The rich, traditional resources of John Wesley's theology in his order of salvation have been reaffirmed by this study. He has proven to be "a very considerable resource in our own time for our theological reflection."⁷

⁷Outler, Theology in the Wesleyan Spirit, 1.

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